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YOUTH TELL THEIR STORY

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By
HOWARD M. BELL

A Study of the Conditions and Attitudes of Young People in Maryland between the Ages of 16 and 24

CONDUCTED FOR
THE AMERICAN YOUTH COMMISSION

**AMERICAN COUNCIL ON EDUCATION
WASHINGTON, D. C.**

1938

YOUTH TELL THEIR STORY

A report based on a survey for the American Youth Commission of the American Council on Education. The membership of the Commission is as follows:

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First printing, May 1938
Second printing, July 1938

on Ed 2.00

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FOREWORD

WHEN the American Youth Commission began its work in October 1935, it was faced with the necessity of identifying the major needs of our youth population. Because there was a serious lack of adequate and reliable information about the conditions that were surrounding our young people it was impossible for the Commission to do any constructive, long-range planning until it had a more complete picture of youthful needs. The Commission therefore set aside approximately two years of its allotted time to the task of identifying and defining the major factors in the youth problem. In this process it brought to its aid all the information that it could obtain from an analysis of the many surveys of youth that had been made in recent years. In addition, it carried on a series of comprehensive studies on its own responsibility, sinking sample shafts at various levels and in different parts of the country in an effort to discover what the needs of youth are and how those needs are being served by present institutions. It sampled the youth population of two states (Pennsylvania and Maryland), one large middle-sized city (Dallas, Texas), one smaller municipality (Muncie, Indiana), and forty rural villages scattered throughout the country.

This survey in the state of Maryland represents one of the major accomplishments of the Commission to date. In attempting to ascertain true conditions, representatives of the Maryland study went directly to youth themselves, and, by means of personal interviews, secured first-hand information and opinions from more than 13,000 individuals. Great caution was taken to assure the reliability of the data which should be gathered. Much care was exercised in the preparation of the schedule of questions and the manual of instructions which accompanied it. The interviewers were given a special course of training before undertaking their work. Furthermore, the sampling technique used was scientifically developed and rigid controls were employed to guarantee strict adherence to the standards that were adopted. The statement of the statistician called upon to review the techniques being employed in the investigation is of interest. Dr. Bruno Fels, nominated, at our request for a disinterested evaluation, by the Central Statistical Board of the United States government, says in his report to the Commission: "I do not hesitate to state that in my opinion there can hardly be found a more thorough and well planned way of taking such a sample. . . . After all, it seems to me that quite apart from the method of sampling or from the degree to which this sample may be representative of the youth of the United States as a whole, the full importance of this study is to be seen in the results obtained from youth of every social and economic background, of different race, parentage, and over a definite range of

FOREWORD

ages, et cetera. This analysis of the differential within the group of youth included in the sample appears to have been attained to a full one hundred per cent."

The Commission is indebted to Dr. Owen R. Lovejoy, the general supervisor of the Maryland, Dallas, and Muncie studies, and to Mr. Howard M. Bell, who was immediately in charge of the Maryland investigation, for their efficient leadership. These men and the staff which was recruited and trained under them have produced for us an invaluable picture of a cross-section of our American youth population.

This investigation brings into sharp relief certain urgent social problems that must be faced. It seems desirable in this foreword to identify several of the more important issues set forth:

1. Certainly one of the paramount problems which this study reveals is the necessity of equalizing educational opportunities. The facts bearing upon this situation are disturbing. Almost a constant inverse ratio exists between the birth rate for any given group and its economic status. The social classes who have the fewest children possess the highest per capita wealth. In general, those who enjoy the richest cultural resources are failing to replace themselves, whereas those who have the lowest income have the highest number of children per family. Profound consequences for the future of the country are inherent in these facts. It has been argued that a democracy can exist only among equals and that in every society hitherto the inevitable inequality between economic classes has nullified every democratic program. The facts in this study indicate that our present secondary school is still a highly selective institution adapted to the needs of a small minority of our population. (The public schools of this country have been supported on the theory that they serve as an instrument for the maintenance of equality of opportunity. In view of the very great inequalities in educational opportunity that exist at the present time, one may well question whether this end is, in fact, being accomplished. There is grave danger that the public school system, if present tendencies persist, may become a positive force in creating those very inequalities in the condition of men that it was designed to reduce.

2. The second need identified by this study is that of finding employment for youth as they emerge from their school experience. The gap which now exists between school and employment is reaching ominous proportions. It is established in this study that the percentage of out-of-school and employable youth who had not obtained any full-time employment at the expiration of a year after leaving school falls within the range of 40 to 46 per cent. The average period of delay for the youth who dropped out of school before the age of 16 was three and a half years, and the average duration of the unemployment of all these youth was a year

FOREWORD

and eleven months. Twenty-six per cent of all of them have never been employed. It is imperative, therefore, that ways be found of bridging this gap.

3. A very large percentage of youth assert that economic security is their most urgent personal need. The problem of unemployment is very great, but even employed youth face serious difficulties. Rates of pay tend to be low; hours tend to be long; a majority of youth with jobs must contribute to the support of families. Many youth are in blind-alley jobs. Some are in jobs which they will shortly lose because of advancing age. Many more aspire to enter professional and semi-professional fields than are at all likely to be accommodated, and the majority are forced into unskilled or only slightly skilled occupations. Youth face an occupational future in industry that is becoming more mechanized, less concerned with highly developed mechanical skills, less given to practical instruction outside the industrial plant, and more insecure for one with a single vocational skill. In a word, *mobility* has taken the place of *fixity*, and *uncertainty* the place of *security*.

4. Guidance is one of youth's most pressing necessities. Under present conditions only a small minority of youth are receiving anything that could be called adequate vocational guidance. The increasing complexity and tempo of modern life demands a more effective system for the induction of youth into appropriate channels of employment than now exist.

5. This study also reveals the lack of appropriate and adequate vocational training. At the present time there is too little relationship between the types of jobs which youth enter and the training which they have received. The need for vocational training is especially acute for rural youth. The occupational training facilities for trade employment in rural areas are practically nonexistent. Education and training as at present organized are deficient both for those youth who will remain in rural territories and for those who will migrate to the cities.

6. The program of general secondary education for youth is in serious need of thorough reorganization. There is abundant evidence that the secondary schools as now operated are ill-suited to a large percentage of youth attending them. We seem to be rapidly approaching the time when something approximating one hundred per cent of our youth are going to remain in school up to 18 years of age or through what is now the senior high school. Since the majority of youth cannot get jobs until after 18 years of age, and since the vast majority of them can be trained for their specific jobs in short-term courses, it is clear that the high school period is going to be free for training of a more general character. The time has come when we must think of providing a common education for practically all of our youth up through the senior high school. This is a new responsibility for our secondary schools and one which no society at any time has ever been called

FOREWORD

upon to face. The meeting of this problem will tax all the educational statesmanship that we possess.

7. Because of the lack of employment opportunities and the reduction in hours of labor, the matter of leisure time emerges as a social problem of real significance. The training of youth and adults alike for a constructive use of their spare time is surely one of the major objectives of modern education. Recreation and education are parallel needs.

8. If we are to have happy and effective citizens, it is clear that a great deal of attention must be given to health education, including social and personal hygiene.

9. Any listing of the problems raised by this study would be seriously deficient that did not bring to our notice the implications for citizenship that arise out of the attitudes which young people hold. Youth's indifference to the ballot and to other civic responsibilities and privileges is worthy of serious attention on the part of those who are called upon to provide a program for the training of our future citizens.

10. These studies also reflect the need for community planning for youth. The present organization of social service work in the United States is very complex. Made up of a network of agencies—local, county, state, and federal; public, private, and semi-public; religious, philanthropic, and profit-making—the social organization has been motivated largely by individualism and laissez faire. It has evolved with little conscious social planning. Whenever needs arose, institutions and agencies arose to provide for those needs. The result is that we have hundreds of agencies but no well integrated program for the handling of community problems. These studies reveal wide gaps in our services to youth, particularly for those in the older age groups. Community disorganization constitutes a major difficulty in planning a program to meet the needs of youth. Each agency works with little or no regard for the others, with the result that the treatment of social problems is undertaken by institutions or agencies acting in their individual capacities rather than from a unified approach.

We need therefore a comprehensive program which must first of all develop a sociological approach to the problems and find ways of focusing all the efforts which society can make upon the individual youth and his needs. This is the starting point and no amount of work is going to be of much value unless there is effective coordination at the point of operation, which is the individual youth. In the "community approach" we must find the natural unit which touches the lives of individuals most directly and start building our programs there. An essential step in the care and education of youth is for each community which has its own distinctive pattern to make its own inquiry to ascertain what are the present needs

FOREWORD

and wants of its young people. Continuous investigation should be carried on to seek out the class of youth who are either overlooked or wilfully excluded from the service of existing agencies for various reasons of institutional policy.

I commend this study to all groups and individuals who are interested in young people and who have responsibility for the development of programs that relate to youth and their needs.

HOMER P. RAINEY, *Director*
American Youth Commission

ACKNOWLEDGMENT

A SOCIAL study like the present one is peculiarly the result of group effort. Over sixty persons collaborated to make this report possible. There would be an unusual degree of presumption, therefore, in a single individual's assuming the credit of authorship for a document that is so clearly the result of the combined labor of so many persons.

The limitation of space forbids an individual expression of appreciation to all the thirty-five interviewers who conducted the thirteen and a half thousand interviews, or the twenty statistical clerks, editors, and coders who prepared the schedules for tabulation. Without the care, intelligence, and industry that went into the performance of these tasks, this study could not have been made.

More tangible, if not more basic, were the invaluable contributions of the survey director's senior staff. A deep sense of gratitude is felt for the assistance of Dr. A. C. Rosander who, besides assuming responsibility for the tabulations, prepared most of the tables and all of the charts that appear in this report. For her help in developing the schedule, supervising interviews, and assisting in the preparation of the preliminary draft, the supervisor is acutely conscious of his indebtedness to Robin Smith Biddison. In the initial training of the interviewers, Dr. Cleo Chrisof performed a difficult job with precision and tact. Ruth Hofmeister typed the entire manuscript three times and contributed valuable suggestions. For the good-humored imagination reflected in the pictorial graphs, a word of gratitude to Eben Anderson.

Before closing this all too brief acknowledgment, I should like to confess my indebtedness to Miss Bessie Stern of the Maryland State Department of Education, Dr. M. M. Chambers of the Commission staff, Dean W. S. Small of the University of Maryland, Dr. Willard E. Givens of the National Education Association, and Dr. Spurgeon Bell of The Brookings Institution for the benefit of their penetrating criticisms. And, finally, to Dr. Owen R. Lovejoy, my immediate superior, and to Dr. Homer P. Rainey, the director of the Commission, my profound gratitude for their unfailing encouragement and sound advice.

HOWARD M. BELL

Washington, D. C.
April 1, 1938

CONTENTS

	Page
INTRODUCTION	1
Chapter 1	
NATIONAL IMPLICATIONS OF THE MARYLAND DATA	7
Chapter 2	
YOUTH AND THE HOME	15
Chapter 3	
YOUTH AND THE SCHOOL	49
Chapter 4	
YOUTH AT WORK	101
Chapter 5	
YOUTH AT PLAY	157
Chapter 6	
YOUTH AND THE CHURCH	191
Chapter 7	
ATTITUDES	207
Appendix	
BASIC TOTALS FOR THE PRIMARY GROUPS OF YOUTH INTERVIEWED	256
LIST OF TABLES	258
LIST OF FIGURES	262
LIST OF PICTORIAL GRAPHS	263
MARYLAND YOUTH SURVEY SCHEDULE	264
INDEX	271

INTRODUCTION

SINCE Adam, there have been but two generations—the young and the old. And one of the most ancient and venerable human pastimes is the business of one of these generations looking with a quizzical and none too sympathetic eye upon the activities and the philosophies of the other.

The essential character of this younger generation of Americans has been so variously interpreted by adults that the student who seeks to understand it is likely to experience considerable difficulty in arriving at any sound conclusions. While some adult spectators are inclined to see our youth going hell-bent to perdition, other observers will see them as developing into a freer, stronger, more intelligent, and self-reliant generation than has ever appeared upon the stage of human affairs.

In this babel of confusing and contradictory voices, one might well wonder where to look for the truth. Those responsible for the present study have proceeded on the assumption that the best single source of authentic information about the essential character of this younger generation is the young people themselves. So, through the agency of trained and experienced interviewers, the American Youth Commission of the American Council on Education has gone direct to youth—has given them a chance to reveal the conditions under which they are living, to speak their minds on significant issues, and generally to bare their souls.

The present inquiry is one of the most comprehensive of its kind ever undertaken. Its scope is as wide as the activities of youth, and its range as broad as society itself.

THE YOUTH PROBLEM

Almost lost behind the fog of the immediate reasons for such a study, and the insistent demands by socially minded people that such a study be made, is the first and primary reason—the recognition of what has emerged during the past few years as distinctly a youth problem.

The genesis of the problem probably goes back to the days when the more or less indiscriminate employment of children in business and industry was generally accepted with casual indifference, and to the unfortunately dead past when circumstances assured every normal youth, willing to make the effort, a place under the sun. The physical frontier with its undeveloped resources of agricultural land, minerals, and timber made unemployment unheard of and idleness a disgrace. A rapidly growing population, boomed by heavy immigration as well as by high birth rates, created constantly increasing demands for professional services in teaching, medicine, and law.

But now what have we? A brave, new world? Well, perhaps. Yet, with all its glitter of newness and the fanfare of its often dubious bravery it is hardly a place of rejoicing for great numbers of the youth who live in it. How many, on looking back, will feel impelled to exclaim with the romantic poet of another day, "Ah, then 'twas glorious to be alive, but to be young was very heaven!"

If there is somewhat less rejoicing among our modern youth over the blessings of being young, it is quite likely because they have found themselves caught in the meshes of a complicated social machinery for which they have neither the background of experience nor the benefit of sufficiently realistic instruction to enable them to understand. If there is anything at which to wonder, it is not that they are befuddled and bewildered, but that they are not a good deal more befuddled and bewildered than they are. Along with the problems that are historically and traditionally those of every generation and every age, the youth of this modern generation find themselves facing a problem that is uniquely and increasingly their own: what to do with themselves during the ever widening period between the time when schools are through with them and jobs are ready for them. Here is the crucial element in the Youth Problem.

In addressing itself to the amelioration of the difficulties of young people, and in devoting its efforts to the business of pointing the way to a practical solution of their fundamental problem, the American Youth Commission is quite alive to the size of the job it has undertaken. It fully realizes that if any effective solution is to be worked out and any effective program is to be adopted, they must grow out of the concerted and purposeful action of all agencies, both public and private, dedicated to the service of youth.

As one of these agencies, the first move of the American Youth Commission was to embark on a cruise of exploration, determined to discover the essential needs of youth and, once these discoveries were made, to recommend how these needs might best be met. Between the day when, for whatever reason, the young person sees the last of his schoolroom and the day when he experiences the gusto of his first job, there has developed what, for him, is a veritable "no man's land of final futility." If we care to avoid the social and economic penalties that must inevitably come from a continued indifference to the needs of our young people, it is altogether fitting and logical that we make every effort to discover and adopt the best ways and means of filling these wasted years with healthful and constructive activity.

Such, in general, is the Commission's primary reason for making studies like the one we are about to consider. It has been indicated that a clear understanding of this reason is essential to an intelligent appraisal of the following report. Equally important, however, is an understanding of how these studies are made.

PROCEDURES

The whole body of data, gathered over a period of seven months with a field staff of thirty-five interviewers, can well be divided into two kinds—facts that reveal conditions and expressed opinions that indicate attitudes.

Of the general accuracy of the factual data that were recorded we feel there can be little reasonable doubt, as there seldom existed any inclination or motive on the part of a young person to give false information. As for the responses to the questions designed to elicit attitudes and opinions, they can, taken together, be accepted as an indication of the extent to which our young people between the ages of sixteen and twenty-four are thinking about the significant issues of our time. It was not assumed, of course, that every youth had even the most naïve opinion about many of the issues raised in the course of the interview. When a subject stated that he had never given any thought to this or that matter, the interviewer recorded a “no opinion” and passed on to the next question. When the subject did have an opinion and wished to express it, the interviewer recorded this point of view with a detached and impersonal objectivity. The result was the acquisition of a body of information which, with a measure of generosity, can quite reasonably be interpreted as the philosophy of modern youth.

PERSONNEL STANDARDS

Another matter that is essential to an intelligent evaluation of any social survey is an understanding of personnel standards. The contention that the quality of a research project can rise no higher than its personnel standards is a commonplace. However, the fact that people responsible for such studies often choose, or are forced to adopt, such measures as paying interviewers on a piecework basis of so much a schedule, selecting workers on the basis of need rather than merit, and generally regarding the matter of training as a technical gesture, would seem not only to justify but to demand a brief consideration of these vitally important matters.

No interviewer was engaged for field work in the Maryland study who did not have the endorsement of responsible local and professional persons—usually the superintendent of schools and the county welfare executive. Efforts were made to engage interviewers with previous training and experience in social agencies. Most of the workers came to the Maryland staff with such backgrounds. Others, when native ability and general interviewing experience seemed to justify an appointment, were recruited from such professions as teaching, nursing, and newspaper work.

Every effort was made to engage workers who, along with the necessary ability and experience, were also known and respected residents in their various communities. However, the policy of selecting local people to do the local job was carried out only when the local applicants met the professional standards that were set down.

Wherever they failed to meet these standards, interviewers were transferred from other localities. This was necessary in the case of only two counties.

PERSONNEL TRAINING

Almost as important as standards of selection is the matter of personnel training—instructing interviewers in the administration of the particular questionnaire to be used. If interviewers are to do acceptable work, they must have a clear understanding both of the objectives of their study and the procedures to be observed in making it. They must see it clearly and see it whole—and they must all see it the same way. There must be, in other words, uniformity of interpretation on the part of all workers, both as to the meaning and purpose of each question, and the method of approaching it.

In order to reduce to a minimum any diversity of interpretation on the part of members of the interviewing staff, there was first developed a comprehensive interviewer's manual. This manual was, as necessity demanded, supplemented by bulletins. But of equal, if not greater, importance than either manual or bulletins, was the period of training which each worker was given before he was permitted to interview. This "course" was conducted by a trained supervisor. It consisted in a detailed explanation of the purpose and the terms of each question, and instructions as to how each question should be approached. This was followed by a series of demonstration interviews in which the supervisor interviewed a subject in the presence of the trainee. Once it seemed clear that the prospective interviewer was ready to administer the schedule and conduct an interview, he was permitted to do so under the instructor's observation. If and when it became obvious that he had a clear understanding of what was involved in the interview, he was turned loose to do the job alone.

As a final check, editors thoroughly familiar with the process were assigned to edit the completed schedules as they were mailed in from the field. Any errors or inconsistencies were spotted, and when necessary the schedules were returned to the worker for correction or a re-interview. Whenever it would seem desirable, interviewers were requested to report to the central office for further training. If distance or some other factor rendered this inadvisable, a supervisor went to the worker.

Thus, by means of the manual, bulletins, a rigid course of training, careful editing, and periodical conferences between supervisor and workers, a reasonable uniformity of schedule interpretation and interviewing technique was assured. By means of these procedures, interviewers were trained to conduct over thirteen thousand interviews. They not only asked identical questions of every youth, but their approach to these questions was essentially the same.

THE ATTITUDE OF THE INTERVIEWER

The attitude of the interviewer toward his subjects was one of friendly, yet impersonal, detachment. He had nothing to prove and sought to prove nothing. His job was to uncover the facts concerning the conditions under which youth were living, to determine the extent to which they were participating in the activities of existing agencies, and to find out what, if anything, they were thinking about such "burning questions" as the relations between government and private industry, the merit system, child labor, relief, and war.

The youth were given every assurance that their responses would be treated as confidential, that nothing they might say would ever be permitted to affect adversely the interests of either themselves or their parents.

The only reward the interviewer could offer them for their time (usually about an hour, but sometimes as long as three) was the expressed hope that the body of information to which they were voluntarily making their contributions would, at some future time, add something to the development of more effective and comprehensive programs for the education and care of other young people like themselves.

In almost every instance, this approach was successful. Interviewers' reports indicate that less than 1 per cent of the youth who were approached refused to grant an interview. Tabulations show further that in less than 3 per cent of the interviews was the worker conscious of either hostility or suspicion on the part of the youth. In the great majority of cases, the youth's attitude toward the interview was reported as cooperative and interested. Very often he regarded the incident as a valuable educational experience, involving problems and issues about which his opinions had never been solicited. A very common reaction was a slightly pathetic mixture of gratitude and pride. As one youth, who enjoyed the chance to speak his mind, expressed it: "Usually we don't get asked. We're told to hush."

WHERE YOUTH WERE INTERVIEWED

In the Maryland inquiry every effort was made to see and understand each young person, not as an isolated individual, but as a more or less active participant in the agencies and institutions of a complicated and often bewildering society. The province of the study was not a single segment of the environmental circle that surrounds each youth, but the whole circle—his school, church, street gangs, neighborhood clubs, recreation centers, libraries, his job, and his home.

To reach these youth, the Commission's agents went anywhere and everywhere that young people were to be found. Most of them, 52 per cent, were interviewed in their homes. The next largest group, about 33 per cent, were found elsewhere in their neighborhoods—their clubs, community centers, street corners, swimming pools, pub-

lic parks, dance halls, beer "joints," drug stores, and anywhere else that youth might congregate.

Some of these youth were visited in the quiet security of their parents' estates, some in the lush setting of swank country clubs, and still others in the breezy atmosphere of fraternity and sorority houses. That they might not miss the other social extreme, the interviewers went to relief offices where youth along with adults awaited their turn at the dole, and to employment agencies where they awaited their chance at a job. And finally, to complete their invasion of the world in which young people live, the interviewers went to the places where they work—to farm laborers in their fields, to oyster shuckers who sing out their indifference to the dullness of their jobs, to textile workers freed from the thrall of looms, and to young miners, up from the dark, thanking whatever gods they have for at least the boon of light.

Under such a variety of circumstances and from such a diversity of social, economic, and educational levels, the Maryland interviews were taken. The primary purpose of the interviewer was to solicit and record facts concerning the conditions under which young people live. Yet, along with these primary factual data, they also probed for ideas, reactions, and attitudes. From these voluntary expressions of opinion, the Commission's staff is confident that it can arrive at some sound conclusions as to the extent to which this younger generation has been indoctrinated by the idealism, passions, and prejudices peculiar to our time.

If the following pages will reveal anything, they will reveal the activities and the thinking of a generation that is still making an effort to adjust itself to the educational, social, and vocational realities of an era that is past. With what looks very much like a pathetic docility, youth are trying somehow to find adequate satisfaction in such things as a secondary educational system that too often persists in preparing them for colleges they will never enter, a system of vocational training that too frequently trains them for jobs they will never find, and colleges of "liberal" arts that develop cultural tastes that quickly become atrophied in a chaotic society which denies the means of their satisfaction.

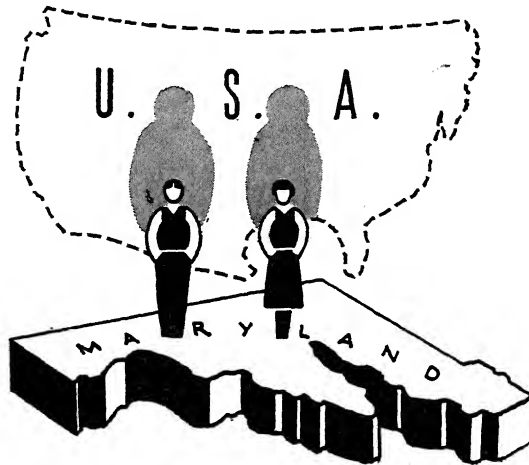
If there is anything in the nature of the present situation for sober adults to view with alarm, it is not that youth will rise in revolt against the programs and policies of antiquated institutions that are intended to serve them, but that they will, with a supine meekness, continue to accept these programs and policies exactly as they inherit them.

At a time when there is so much talk about the dangers of reactionary oldsters, it might be an excellent idea to give a little thought to the dangers of developing a generation of apathetic youth. In the old a smug conservatism may be a menace, but in the young a listless apathy can quite easily become a national calamity.

CHAPTER 1

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NATIONAL IMPLICATIONS OF THE MARYLAND DATA



PROBABLY no fact or condition is more basic in an intelligent evaluation of a social survey than the representativeness of its sample. In a study like the present one, it is neither possible nor necessary to reach 100 per cent of all the subjects concerned. Small percentages are interviewed on the assumption that the characteristics of the part will be essentially the same as the characteristics of the whole.

In Maryland, 13,528 young people between the ages of sixteen and twenty-four were interviewed by the agents of the Commission. In the state, the total youth population between these ages is about 250,000. In the United States as a whole, there are more than 20,000,000. Therefore, it was of vital importance that every possible effort be made to justify the assumption that the 13,500 young people who were to be interviewed could speak with some degree of authority, not only for the quarter of a million young people of Maryland, but for the 20,000,000 young people of the nation.

In so far as the persistent exercise of scientific controls can be made to insure the integrity of a sample, the 13,528 Maryland youth who were interviewed can be definitely accepted as representative of the young people of Maryland. The first precaution consisted in choosing representative areas in the state. On the basis of pertinent social and economic criteria, eleven census areas were chosen from the city of Baltimore's seventy-eight. From the general standpoint of socio-economic level, these areas ranged from the most opulent to the most impoverished neighborhoods. Exactly the same principle was observed in the selection of ten of the state's twenty-three counties.

There is a need for still further precautions if a representative sample is to be obtained. In Maryland these further precautions consisted in determining the approximate state ratios for such important groups as youth in and out of school, youth from relief and nonrelief families, from farm and nonfarm families, employed and unemployed, white and Negro, male and female, married and single, and youth in each separate age group from sixteen to twenty-four. Once the best available estimates of these state ratios were determined, the next step was to make certain, by means of periodical counts, that a proper representation from these social and economic categories was being reached.

In view of the precautions that were taken and the constant checks that were made, the staff succeeded in eliminating any serious doubt as to the representativeness of their group so far as Maryland is concerned. Every kind of neighborhood or area, every social and economic stratum, and every educational and intellectual level was proportionately represented in the final sample. Youth from cities, towns, villages, and the open country; young people from exclusive country clubs, middle-class neigh-

borhoods, and blighted areas; students from colleges, high schools, vocational and parochial schools, along with young people who have never gone to school—all these were given their place in the composite picture of the younger generation of Maryland.

IS MARYLAND A "TYPICAL" STATE?

The degree of authority with which these 13,528 youth of Maryland can be said to speak for the 20,000,000 young people between the ages of sixteen and twenty-four in the United States depends largely upon the answer to this question: To what extent, and in what essential respects, is Maryland a "typical" state?

For a considerable time before the study was launched, the staff of the Commission pondered this question. That Maryland was finally selected as a state laboratory was due to a number of reasons. Although its history is in some respects unique, it has shown during the past half century an unusual capacity to reflect national trends of thought.

Moreover, Maryland seemed quite clearly to present a great variety of characteristically "American" situations and conditions. First of all, there is the essentially metropolitan area of Baltimore, differing more in such intangible things as atmosphere than in the fundamental social and economic problems that every large city must meet. Again, there is the suburban area of Prince Georges County, serving the city of Washington as a populous and inadequately organized hinterland, in the manner of most suburbs.

To a sensitive observer, the counties of Maryland comprise a little world that has within its relatively narrow borders a diversity that is not usually found in other states. In the northern and central counties of Carroll and Howard there are stretches of slightly rolling farm lands, dotted here and there with patches of uncleared forest, that differ only superficially from other agricultural areas in the Central Atlantic and Midwestern states. In such southern counties as Calvert, where life is predominantly rural, tobacco culture and a large proportion of Negroes tend to give the area a flavor that is essentially southern. Garrett County, in the extreme northwestern corner of the state, has a topography as well as a social and economic character that stamp it with the peculiarities of the places where "hill people" live. The mountains to the east of Garrett are scarred with small mining settlements, such as those in the Georges Creek district of Allegany County. Some eke out a precarious existence on what is left of the soft coal market, while others reflect the spiritless resignation of industrially disinherited towns.

Farther to the east, between the hill county of Garrett and the rolling farm lands of the central part of the state, there is Cumberland, an industrial city of factories and mills. And finally, across Chesapeake Bay and to the south, there is Maryland's Eastern Shore with its truck farms, fishing fleets, and oyster houses.

To a Marylander these are counties or areas of Maryland, but to a stranger they seem more in the nature of different slants at this infinitely varied spectacle we call the American Scene. To the extent that the areas of Maryland are stamped with the social and economic characteristics of the nation as a whole, it can reasonably be said to be a "typical" state, and to the degree to which its youth are molded and conditioned by pressures that are essentially national, its young people can be said to be "typical" Americans. So far as those responsible for the Maryland study are concerned, Maryland is such a state, and its youth are such Americans. It is because of this that they consider it neither improper nor unreasonable to present the young people of this study, not merely as young Marylanders, but as young Americans.

DO THE MARYLAND DATA REFLECT NATIONAL CONDITIONS?

To urge that this sample of 13,528 Maryland young people constitutes a perfectly representative sampling of America's 20,000,000 youth between the ages of sixteen and twenty-four would be as presumptuous as it is unnecessary. It is, after all, a sample study and not a national youth census. We are therefore impelled only to suggest that in many essential respects the Maryland sample exhibits, within reasonable limits, the characteristics of the national youth population.

The answer to the question, "What makes a representative sample of young people?" is to be found in the answer to another question, "From what social material is a younger generation made?" Without attempting a comprehensive sociological analysis, let us accept, if we can, the basic premise that in the generation we are considering, as with all generations, there are present varying numbers of individuals from different social, economic, and educational levels, living in communities or areas with different social, economic, and educational standards or backgrounds. In more specific terms, we are called upon to recognize the existence of social, economic, and educational inequalities and diversities—to recognize, for example, the existence in our society of such socially underprivileged groups as the Negro, such economically depressed groups as the families on relief, and such educationally retarded groups as the illiterate.

Any acceptable sample of young people must include therefore a reasonably accurate number of representatives from the essential elements from which the larger group, or generation, is made. It must include a fair representation from youth living in cities, towns, villages, and on farms. It must come reasonably close to the national ratios with respect to such fundamental divisions as youth in and out of school, youth from relief and nonrelief families, of foreign and native-born parents, from Protestant, Catholic, or Jewish homes, male and female, white and Negro, and all the ages between sixteen and twenty-four.

The following table reveals the similarity in the characteristics of the Maryland youth sample and the national youth population. The vertical column under "United States youth" shows the distribution of American youth within specified categories. In the second column, under "Maryland sample," is shown the distribution of the youth interviewed with respect to these same social groups. The right-hand column shows the degree of difference between the national and the sample percentages.

TABLE 1—CHARACTERISTICS OF THE MARYLAND SAMPLE COMPARED WITH CHARACTERISTICS OF THE NATIONAL YOUTH POPULATION

Primary group	Percentage of each group		Difference between Maryland sample and United States youth ^b
	United States youth ^a	Maryland sample	
Age:			
16.....	11.8	11.2	— 0.6
17.....	11.4	10.5	— 0.9
18.....	11.7	11.0	— 0.7
19.....	11.1	12.2	+ 1.1
20.....	11.0	12.1	+ 1.1
21.....	11.0	12.0	+ 1.0
22.....	10.9	10.4	— 0.5
23.....	10.6	9.2	— 1.4
24.....	10.5	11.4	+ 0.9
Sex:			
Male.....	49.4	50.9	+ 1.5
Female.....	50.6	49.1	— 1.5
Marital status:			
Males married.....	16.1	13.1	— 3.0
Females married.....	35.7	33.4	— 2.3
Race:			
White.....	87.2	84.6	— 2.6
Negro, other.....	12.8	15.4	+ 2.6
Farm, nonfarm:			
Farm.....	25.5	21.0	— 4.5
Nonfarm.....	74.5	79.0	+ 4.5
Parentage:			
Native.....	70.1	86.9	+16.8
Foreign, mixed.....	29.9	13.1	—16.8
School status:			
In school.....	19.0	19.4	+ 0.4
Out of school.....	81.0	80.6	— 0.4

^a Based on youth 16 to 24 years of age. *Fifteenth Census of the United States* (1930), Population, Vol. III, General Report, pp. 593-601, 845, 1180-81.

^b Minus differences mean that the sample did not meet United States percentages, while plus differences mean that the sample exceeded United States percentages. (The differences in the above table are within the allowable errors due to sampling, with the exception of those associated with the parentage and the farm groups. Both these departures, however, are in the direction in which these factors are operating in the United States.)

These differences between the national and the sample percentages are generally too slight to justify or demand an exhaustive analysis. The only instance in which there appears a substantial difference between the national percentage and the percentage interviewed is in the distribution of youth of native and foreign-born parents. The number of youth of foreign-born parents is undersampled to the extent of 16.8 per cent. As it is often assumed that the foreign element in our population tends to depress economic standards, and as it is somewhat popularly believed that "furriners" tend to lend a pinkish glow to our national thought, the only practical effect of this quite inadvertent undersampling will probably be one of raising the economic level of the group as a whole and, perhaps, to add a slightly unwarranted touch of "100 per cent Americanism" to the group philosophy as revealed in expressed attitudes.

The only other groups that would seem to demand explanation are two that were not included in the distribution table because of the difficulty in getting unchallengeable census data regarding them. These groups are the relief-nonrelief and the employed-unemployed.

As everyone realizes, the number of persons in the United States who are on work relief projects or who receive direct relief through government agencies varies from month to month. The same thing, of course, is true with respect to the number of persons who are gainfully employed. The recognition of these variations forced us, therefore, to accept the most reasonable estimates available for both of these categories.

For the purposes of uniformity of interpretation, a "relief family" was defined as a family that had received economic assistance from a public or private agency at some time during the year preceding the interview. Using the best available information as a guide,¹ we estimated that during the course of the year preceding June 1936, when our interviewing began, about one person in eight at one time or another had received some kind of public or private relief. In the Maryland sample, we reached slightly less than one in eight. For the Negro, our percentage for the relief group was the same as that for the nation—one in four.

For the percentage of youth between the ages of sixteen and twenty-four who were employed, there was almost no reliable information available. Estimates released by the United States Office of Education in November 1935 indicated that the percentage of employment was about 40. In view of the increased industrial activity that had taken place by June 1936, we estimated that the percentage of the employed had increased to somewhere between 40 and 45. The percentage of the Maryland sample is 46.4.

¹ *On Relief*, a publication of the Federal Emergency Relief Administration (October 1935), Chart I.

CHAPTER 2



YOUTH AND THE HOME



IN THE detached calm of cloisters and laboratories, philosophers and scientists have for centuries been pondering the relative influence of heredity and environment. On one side of this ancient controversy have been aligned those who believe, with varying degrees of passion and conviction, that any younger generation is, and will forever be, what the genes and the chromosomes of its ancestors conspire to make it. On the other side have been those who, with similar variations of passion and conviction, have held that the essential quality of a younger generation or any generation has been, and will be, largely determined by the wisdom, the courage, and the foresight of those whom circumstance has given the power to make the world in which they live.

We have no impulse to take sides in this historic wrangle. We feel, with that shadowy and elusive character known as "the man in the street," that both the hereditary line to which we owe our existence and the environmental pressures that incessantly mold us have had, and will continue to have, much to do with making us what we are.

Yet, while our position in this controversy is one of respectful neutrality, we are impelled at the outset to suggest that the activities, in fact the very existence, of most human institutions are based upon the faith that, *after* heredity has had its way with the individual, things can and are being done which profoundly affect, for better or worse, both what he is and what he will become.

This faith in the potency of environmental pressures is the basic fact that justifies and gives a meaningful purpose to such professions as education, social work, and public health. It is at once the inspiration and the *raison d'être* of such splendid ideals as universal free education. And it is also the only possible excuse for the present study.

YOUTH'S HOME LIFE

For most of us, life begins at home. And, to a large extent, we are what our homes have made us.

It is of primary importance therefore to determine, if possible, the extent to which the home continues to hold its youth. Our method of discovering this was simple and direct. Interviewers asked the youth this question: Would you leave your home if you could?

To anyone who has absorbed recent literature on the prevalence of transiency among our young people, the general answer to this question will come as an encouraging surprise. The potential Wild Boys of the Road, it would seem, are quite definitely a minority. Of every hundred single youth who were living at home at the time of the interview, only three wanted to leave permanently. Although it is true,

as we shall see in a later section, that large numbers of young people would prefer to move to other localities, there was but slight evidence that they wished to sever their home ties or leave the family group.

DO YOUTH LIVE AT HOME?

In view of the fact that the median age for all youth interviewed was 20.4 years, it is rather remarkable that four out of every five were found to be living with their parents or relatives. Even more remarkable, however, is the fact that almost half (46.4 per cent for males and 40.2 per cent for females) of the 3,000 *married* youth were living with their parents or relatives. This situation is perhaps the more significant when it is realized that a period of economic recovery was well under way when they were interviewed.

RELATION OF YOUTH TO PARENTS

How intimate and confidential is the relation of the modern young person and his parents and other members of his family is suggested by the number who reported that they generally turn to members of their families for help when they find themselves worried or in trouble. It appears that girls are generally more inclined to seek advice and comfort from their parents than boys are—65 per cent for the single girls as compared with 50 per cent for the single boys. That marriage tends to loosen the bonds between parents and children is indicated by the fact that only 31 per cent of the married girls and 28 per cent of the married boys discuss their intimate personal problems more frequently with members of their parental families than with other persons.

Where youth usually turn when they are in trouble, and why they go to such sources of guidance as their homes, friends, or ministers, is suggested by the following responses:

"Mother and I usually share our troubles."

"I go to my mother first. If the subject is too deep, I go to father."

"My mother gives me plenty of advice I don't ask for."

"Mother-in-law. We couldn't get along without her."

"If it's not too bad, I ask my mother. If it's bad, I ask my best friend."

"It depends on what type of jam I'm in. If it belongs at home, I go to my parents—if it belongs to the church, I go to the priest."

"I 'wrestle' with my troubles myself."

"I get in a corner and cry it out by myself."

"I don't have anyone to go to."

"Drown it in drink."

"I sing my worry away."

"I just let her slide."

"To anybody who will listen."

"I see my boy friend. He's the only one I can trust."

"I never worry, so I don't have to go to anyone."

"I don't go to nobody, I pray."

"If it's real bad, I go to the Lord."

BROKEN HOMES

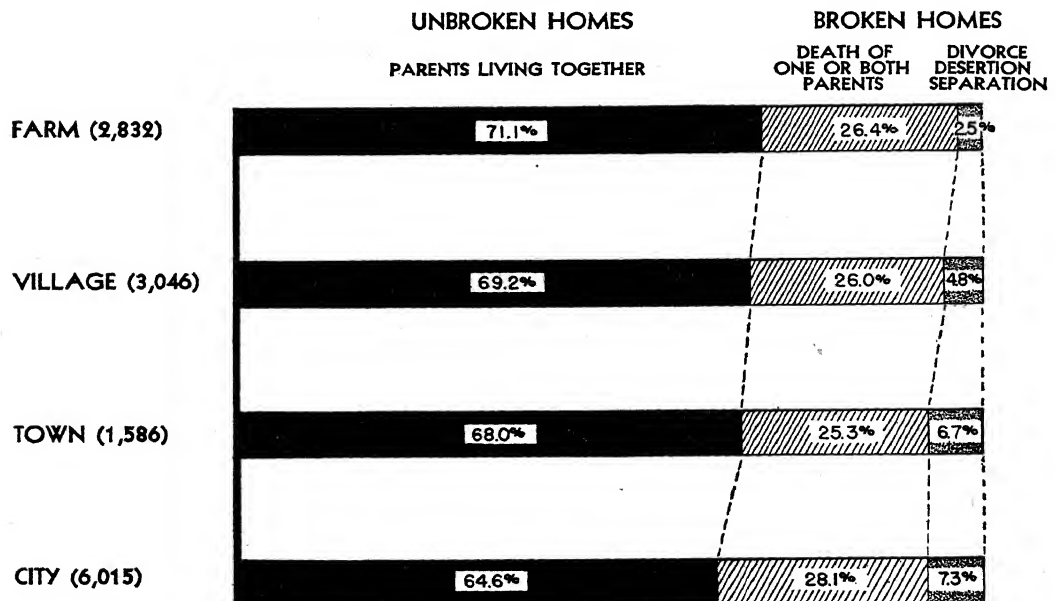
CAUSES OF BROKEN HOMES

Another matter that will be recognized as vitally important in any consideration of the youth's home life is the effect of a broken home upon his social, vocational, and educational status. About two-thirds of the youth had parents who were living together. The other third, 32.3 per cent, were or had been subject to the effects of broken homes caused either by the death of one or both parents, or by separation, divorce, or desertion. Death had been the most usual cause of broken homes, with the father twice as likely as the mother to be the missing member.

RELATION OF RESIDENCE TO BROKEN HOMES

Figure 1 indicates that the frequency of divorce, separation, and desertion is about three times as great among parents living in cities as among parents living on

FIGURE 1
HOME SITUATION OF FARM AND NONFARM YOUTH



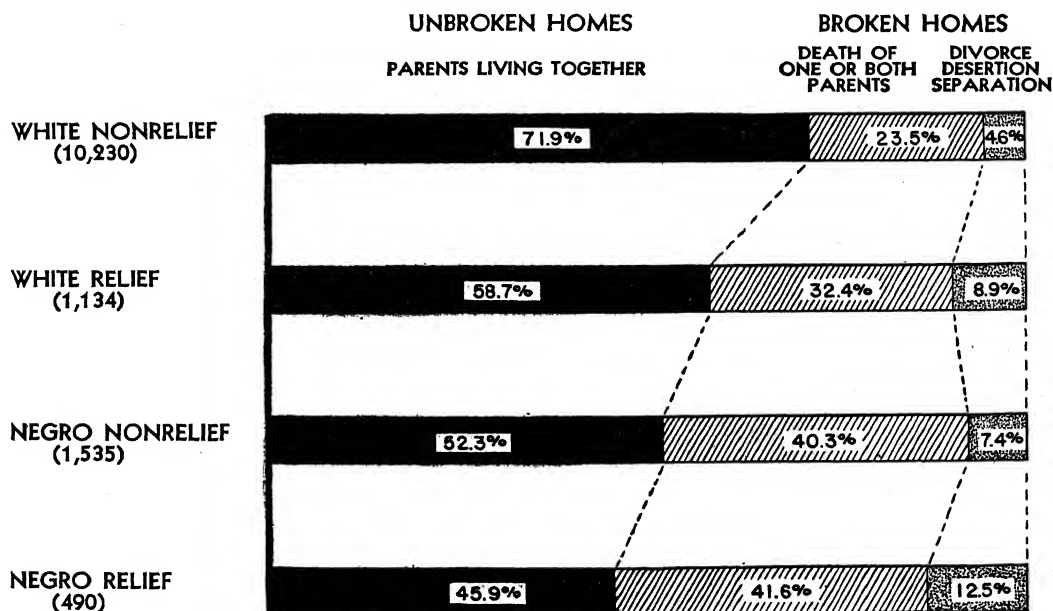
farms. This would seem to indicate that the rate of divorce, separation, and desertion increases as the density of the population of the place of residence increases, and would further suggest that city youth have been subject to the effect of these factors to a much greater extent than those living in towns, villages, or on farms.

RELATION OF RACE TO BROKEN HOMES

The home situation of the white youth seems to be far more favorable than that of the Negro. Only half of the Negro parents were found to be living together, as against 70 per cent for the white parents. This is due partly to the fact that a larger proportion of Negro parents were dead and partly to the fact that divorce, separation, and desertion caused more broken homes among Negroes than among whites. It should be indicated at this point that the average age of the Negro youth interviewed was almost a year older than the average age of the white youth, but this fact alone can hardly explain the substantial difference in the parent mortality rates reported by the Negro youth.

Yet, in spite of what appears to be a relatively unfavorable home situation, the Negro is the least inclined of all groups to want to leave home. Moreover, when he is in trouble, he is quite as likely to turn to his parents for help as the white youth is. While 50.5 per cent of the white youth generally go to their parents for advice when they are in trouble, 48.1 per cent of the Negroes do the same thing.

FIGURE 2
STABILITY OF THE HOME IN RELATION TO RACE AND RELIEF

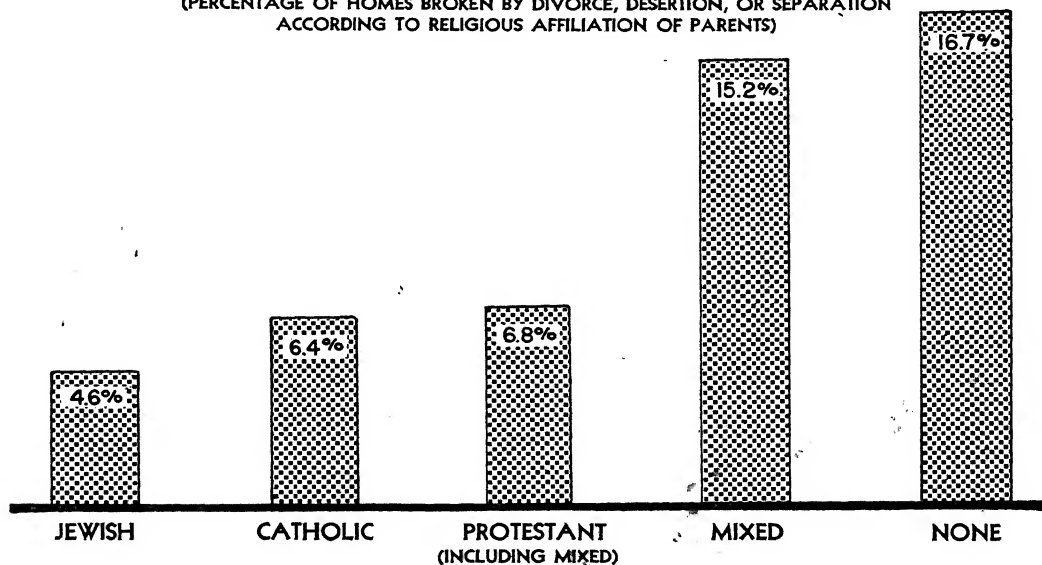


The data reflected in Figure 2 suggest that there is an economic, as well as a residence, factor operating to affect the stability of the home. For both the white and Negro groups, the extent of divorce, separation, and desertion was substantially higher among the families who were or had been on relief during the year preceding the interview.

RELATION OF CHURCH AFFILIATION OF PARENTS TO BROKEN HOMES

The extent to which the religion of the parents acts as a stabilizing factor in the home life of young people is indicated by Figure 3.

FIGURE 3
HOW RELIGION IS RELATED TO BROKEN HOMES
(PERCENTAGE OF HOMES BROKEN BY DIVORCE, DESERTION, OR SEPARATION
ACCORDING TO RELIGIOUS AFFILIATION OF PARENTS)



Data reflected by Figure 3 suggest that Jewish youth are less affected by the domestic consequences of divorce, separation, and desertion than any other religious group. There seems to be almost no difference between homes of Protestant and Catholic backgrounds, the extent of divorce, separation, and desertion for the parents of Catholic youth being 6.4 per cent, and for Protestant parents, 6.8 per cent. The real difference is found among the parents of mixed affiliations—as between combinations of Protestant, Catholic, and Jewish, and those parents with no religious affiliation at all. The extent of divorce, separation, and desertion among parents of mixed religious affiliations is over twice as great as it is among parents whose affiliations are not mixed, while the proportion is still greater among parents with no religious affiliation.

ECONOMIC ASPECTS OF THE HOME

THE USUAL OCCUPATION OF THE YOUTH'S FATHER

The economic level of a family is determined in large measure by the occupation of the father. For our purposes, the father's occupation always refers to his *usual* occupation, that is, the occupation in which he has engaged longest, which may or may not be his present employment. The family is classified by the usual occupation of the father, even though he may have died before the time of the interview.

Four occupational groups—the skilled, semi-skilled, farm owner or tenant, and managerial—account for the occupations of two-thirds of the fathers of all youth interviewed. Specific percentages for all occupational groups are given in Table 2.

TABLE 2—USUAL OCCUPATION OF
YOUTH'S FATHER

Usual occupation	Percentage of all fathers
Skilled.....	22.8
Farm owner-tenant.....	16.2
Managerial.....	15.4
Semi-skilled.....	11.2
Unskilled.....	9.3
Professional-technical.....	5.5
Office.....	4.9
Sales.....	3.9
Farm laborer.....	3.9
Domestic-personal.....	2.8
Other and unknown.....	4.1
Total.....	100.0
Number of youth.....	13,528

A racial analysis of the data in Table 2 indicates that, while 71 per cent of the fathers of white youth are in the occupations paying the higher salaries or wages (skilled, semi-skilled, and white-collar), only 20 per cent of the fathers of Negro youth are in these occupations.

NUMBER OF LIVING CHILDREN IN PARENTAL FAMILY

Among the great variety of factors that will obviously influence the conditions under which a young person lives is the size of the family of which he is a member. To those familiar with the average size of the modern American family as revealed by the 1930 federal census, our median of 4.7 living children per family will seem surprisingly high. It will seem less so, however, when one bears in mind that we necessarily excluded the one-person household and the married couples without

children. All of our families had at least one child—the youth interviewed. Moreover, a “combination family” which included half and foster brothers and sisters was regarded as a family unit. (One such household was found to include twenty-two living children.)

The average size of our families was further increased by the necessity of choosing only those with a child at least 16 years of age. As the median age of our youth was 20.4 years, this means that the median age of the parents was probably about 40 years. The families considered in this study have, therefore, reached what is probably their maximum size. Table 3 is a summary of significant data on this question.

TABLE 3—MEDIAN NUMBER OF LIVING CHILDREN
IN PARENTAL FAMILY

Classification of youth	Median number of living children	Number of youth on which median is based
All youth.....	4.7	13,466
White.....	4.6	11,399
Negro.....	5.8	2,069
Town.....	4.1	1,579
City.....	4.4	5,995
Village.....	4.8	3,048
Farm.....	5.9	2,829
White relief families.....	6.0	1,128
White nonrelief families.....	4.4	10,226
Negro relief families.....	5.8	498
Negro nonrelief families.....	5.8	1,535
Jewish.....	4.1	490
Mixed religious groups.....	4.4	1,145
Protestant.....	4.6	8,873
No religious affiliation.....	5.0	337
Catholic.....	5.5	2,497
Father's occupation:		
Professional-technical.....	3.6	749
Office-sales.....	3.6	1,185
Managerial.....	4.0	2,145
Skilled.....	4.7	3,071
Semi-skilled.....	4.9	1,511
Domestic-personal.....	4.9	382
Unskilled.....	5.6	1,281
Farm owner-tenant.....	6.1	2,106
Farm laborer.....	6.9	500

Although the families of the groups considered in Table 3 are, as previously indicated, somewhat larger than the national average, the numbers of children in the various groups show interesting and significant differences. The groups with the smallest averages (3.6 for both) are those in which the father's occupation is

professional-technical or office-sales, while the groups with the largest averages are those in which the father's occupation is either farm laborer or farm owner. Another group with a relatively large number of living children is that of the white relief families.

When these data are considered from the standpoint of specific groups, we uncover the following facts:

Race. The median Negro family has 1.2 more children, or 25 per cent more, than the white family.

Locality of residence. The size of family tends to decrease as the population density of the area increases.

Relief-nonrelief. The number of children in white relief families is substantially larger than in white nonrelief families (6 as against 4.4), and the median for both white and Negro relief groups is about 1.2 children above the average for the total group.

Church affiliation. The religious group with the largest average number of children *per family* was the Catholic; the smallest average number was found in the Jewish group.

Father's occupation. The median number of children increases as the occupational level of the father descends from professional-technical to farm laborer, the laborer having almost twice as many children as the professional person. This means that occupations where the average income tends to be relatively high are associated with small median numbers of children, whereas the occupations with low and unstable incomes are associated with larger median numbers of children. Under such circumstances, the insecure economic position of the father and of his home is intensified by the increased family burdens he has to meet—or which the relief agencies have to meet. Thus, the economic advantages of the fathers in the better paid occupations are augmented by having smaller families.

In so far as a relatively large number of children in a family tends to limit the opportunities for the growth and development of the individual child, the facts above point to the obvious conclusion that "social planning" for youth should, among other things, take into consideration the varying needs of youth in large and small families.

THE STATUS OF YOUTH IN LARGE AND SMALL FAMILIES

In order that we might come to some idea as to how relatively large families affect the condition of the youth who comprise them, we have made an intensive study of the two extreme family groups—families with one child (the interviewee) and families with nine or more children. Our sampling in these two groups is quite adequate—1,103 families with one child, and 1,350 with nine or more. The significant findings are summarized below.

1. The chances are two to one that parents of foreign (or mixed) birth will have nine or more children, rather than only one child (16.2 per cent as against 8.5 per cent).

2. Thirty per cent of the families of nine or more children were Negroes, whereas only 15 per cent of the total group were of this race.

3. While only half the youth from white families of nine or more children go beyond the eighth grade, nine out of every ten of the youth from white one-child families go beyond this elementary school level.

4. Forty-six per cent of the Negro youth from one-child families fail to go beyond the eighth grade, while almost twice as large a proportion (81 per cent) from the large Negro families fail to go beyond this grade level.

5. Sixty-eight per cent of the youth from single-child white families report that they feel that their school training has been, or will be, of considerable or great economic value to them, while only 43 per cent of the children from large white families make the same report.

6. The probability that a child from a large white family will go to work before he is 16 years old is almost three times as great as it is for the youth in a white single-child home (31.3 per cent as against 11.8 per cent). For the youth from a large Negro family, the same probability is slightly over twice as great (46.4 per cent as against 22.4 per cent).

7. Living in a large family seems to inculcate the desire on the part of the youth members to have fewer children than their parents have had. Youth from families of nine or more children want one-third as many children, while those from single-child homes want almost three times as many as their parents now have.

8. Twice as large a proportion of youth from large families want to leave their homes as is the case with youth from families with only one child.

9. As reported by the youth themselves, almost three times as many large families need the economic lift of the youth's help as is the case with the families of one child. (The difference is 46.1 per cent as against 16.1 per cent.)

10. With the exception of the possession of an automobile and a radio, the white youth in a family of nine or more children enjoys living quarters that are only slightly better than those of the average Negro family of one child. *It would seem that the size of a youth's family can be almost as potent a factor in determining the economic level of his home as the factor of race.*

In this body of data which covers only *some* of the differences between the youth from large and single-child families, about the only real advantage that seems to fall to the lot of the young person of a family of nine or more children is what

appears to be a more stable home. The rate of divorce, separation, and desertion is lower in the large families of both races.

THE EXTENT TO WHICH PARENTS ARE FINANCIALLY DEPENDENT UPON YOUTH

About one out of every five young persons interviewed reported that he was helping to support, or was completely supporting, his parents. Fifteen per cent stated that, although their help was needed at home, they were unable to contribute anything. In nearly two-thirds of the families, the help of the youth was reported as unnecessary. That the overwhelming majority of the youth were willing to help is indicated by the fact that less than 1 per cent stated that they were unwilling to help at home.

The responsibility for helping the parents financially falls more heavily upon the boys than upon the girls—25 per cent of the boys, as against 13 per cent of the girls, contributing partial or total support.

The extent to which youth are free from the obligation of assisting in the support of their parents also varies with the occupational level of the father.

TABLE 4—EXTENT TO WHICH PARENTS NEED THE YOUTH'S
FINANCIAL HELP
(By usual occupation of father)

Father's occupation	Percentage of youth stating that help is needed	Percentage of youth stating that help is given*
Professional-technical.....	15.4	9.3
Managerial.....	20.5	11.9
Office-sales.....	24.5	14.4
Farm owner-tenant.....	27.6	16.3
Skilled.....	35.7	19.9
Domestic-personal.....	42.1	19.8
Semi-skilled.....	44.4	23.5
Unskilled.....	57.3	26.6
Farm laborer.....	63.6	33.6

* The differences between these two columns of percentages are due to the fact that some youth stated their parents needed help, but that they were unable to assist.

As indicated by Table 4, more than six out of every ten youth (63.6 per cent) whose fathers were farm laborers were called upon to contribute something to their parents' support, and more than half of this number stated they were actually doing so at the time of the interview. At the other occupational extreme, less than two out of every ten (15.4 per cent) whose fathers were on the professional-technical level were called upon to make some contribution, and less than two-thirds of this number stated that they were actually doing so.

DO EMPLOYED YOUTH CONTRIBUTE TO THE SUPPORT OF THEIR PARENTS ?

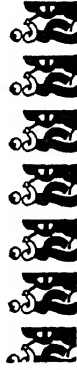
YES

NO

FEDERAL
PROJECT



SEMI-SKILLED



UNSKILLED



DOMESTIC-
PERSONAL



SKILLED



OFFICE-SALES



PROFESSIONAL-
TECHNICAL



MANAGERIAL



EACH FIGURE REPRESENTS 8 % OF THE YOUTH IN EACH OCCUPATIONAL GROUP

A few of the comments that our youth made on this matter of contributing to the support of their parents suggest a wide variety of attitudes.

"I get more than my money's worth. I'm glad to have a home and parents to live with."

"Our parents kept us, now we should keep them."

"I pay seven dollars. That's too much."

"I'm glad I'm able to do it."

"Mother is alone at home with a sick brother. We all keep her off relief, but I can't help much."

"I give my mother everything I make."

"I don't see why he [the father] should get help from us. They have these old age pensions."

"The government should provide for widows. Then I wouldn't have to spend my life in a factory where I earn thirteen dollars a week."

The social and economic implications of these data are obvious. In the low income brackets, one finds youth living under circumstances that tend to force them into some kind of gainful employment at a relatively early age. Examine the families with fathers in the higher occupational and income levels, and one finds youth whose circumstances permit them to look forward to a relatively secure educational and vocational future. As the father's occupational level rises from that of the farm laborer to the professional worker, one finds a progressive decrease in the proportion of their children who are called upon to contribute to the support of the family group.

A youth's obligation to contribute to the support of his parents usually acts as a restriction upon his freedom to plan for his own future. Exactly how much of this obligation, and its consequent restriction, is to be charged to the relatively low income of his father, and how much is to be charged to the relatively large number of his living brothers and sisters (Table 3) is, of course, problematical. At least it is clear that the opportunities for a young person to "live his own life" vary both with the father's occupational and income level and with the size of his parental family.

The problem of providing equality of educational and vocational opportunity for *all* youth presents a number of points of attack. One of these is the obvious one of increasing the wages, and the total income, of economically submerged groups. Another is state supplementation of the income of needy families on the basis of the size of family. Although the underlying motive has often appeared to be more of a military than of a social nature, this method has actually been adopted by certain European governments. Another approach to the problem would be a more general practice of family limitation through birth control.

The issue involved in the choice of these possible alternatives is both vital and basic. One of the most precious jingles of the philosophy of democracy is "equality

of opportunity." A general increase of the income of economically submerged groups would place the responsibility primarily upon industry. A subsidy program would place more responsibility for the provision of such equality upon the shoulders of the state, while a more general family limitation program would tend to place a larger measure of this responsibility upon the head of the family. An effective solution would doubtless involve all three.

THE ECONOMIC STATUS OF THE FAMILY, AS REFLECTED BY THE DENTAL CARE YOUTH RECEIVE

The extent to which the youth's opportunities are generally affected by the occupational level of his father is further suggested, for example, by the varying degree to which youth from the different groups had received dental care during the year preceding the interview.

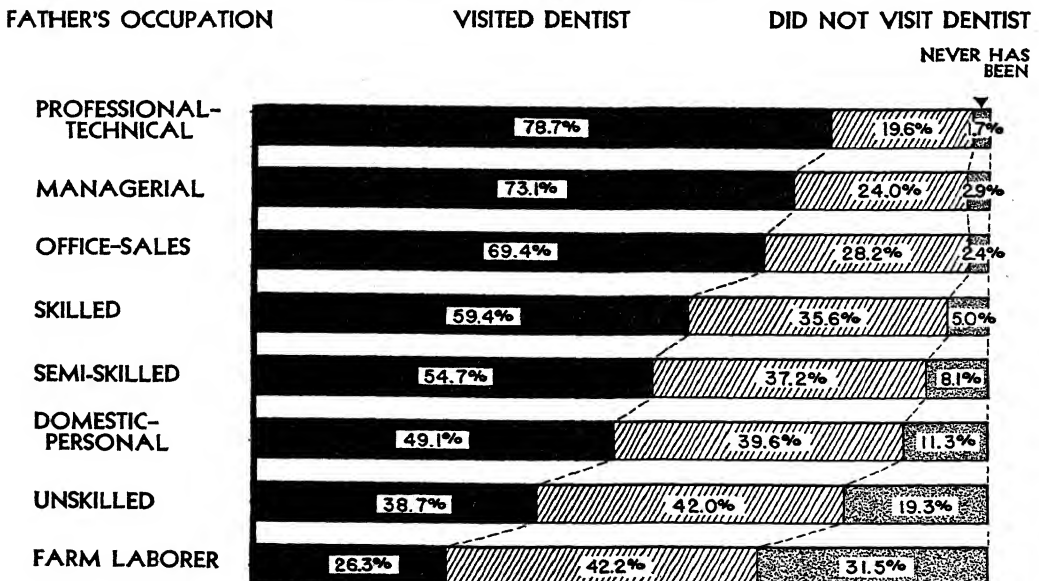
When all the youth are considered together, it is found that more than 40 per cent (42.2) had not received any dental care during the preceding twelve months. One youth out of every twelve had *never* had any dental care at any time.

The very significant differences in the extent to which this important service was received by young people whose fathers were in the various occupational groups are suggested by Figure 4.

FIGURE 4

HOW FATHER'S OCCUPATION AFFECTED GOING TO THE DENTIST

(DURING 12 MONTHS PRECEDING INTERVIEW)



Almost three times as large a proportion of the children of unskilled laborers received *no* dental care as was found to be the case with children of professional-technical workers. Moreover, the ratio of children of farm laborers to the children of professional-technical workers who had *never* been to a dentist was found to be slightly greater than 18 to 1.

It should be interesting, at least to dentists, to hear what a few of these youth have to say about sitting in a dentist's chair.

"That's the person I don't want to see."

"Not much trouble—when I want a tooth pulled I just tie a string to a doorknob."

"Just ain't got the nerve."

"Rather spend money for a good time."

"Always feel I need money worse for something else."

"I've had toothaches, but never serious enough to go to a dentist."

"I haven't gone because the only dentist within 15 miles is white and he won't work on Negroes."

"I'm a Christian Scientist, and I know I have nothing wrong with my teeth."

"I started out to see a dentist a week ago, but my tooth stopped hurting so I came back."

"I got bad teeth, but they don't hurt."

"Never have been. I pull them out myself when they hurt and save money."

"Dentists get in my hair."

HOME CONVENIENCES

We next consider the extent to which young people enjoy what are usually regarded as conveniences of the modern home. To those who may be interested in the exact details concerning the differences uncovered with respect to specific groups, Table 5 on page 32 is significant.

Of the families of all the youth interviewed, nearly one in twenty enjoyed *none* of the conveniences covered in the survey. The living quarters of four out of every five were equipped with electricity, and the same proportion had radios. Two out of three of the families had inside bathrooms, only one-half enjoyed the comforts of a central heating plant, while five out of every nine owned automobiles.

As far as the possession or use of the above conveniences is concerned, it is clear that the city youth live under the most favorable conditions, the town youth under the next best, with the village and farm youth trailing in the order given. The only exception is with respect to the automobile, where the order is reversed. This is probably due to the fact that, to many farmers, the automobile is quite as likely to be a necessary means of transportation as a "pleasure vehicle."

Conveniences Enjoyed by Farm Youth

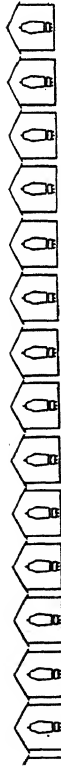
In an era which, according to various reports, is both modern and civilized, the condition under which a substantial proportion of young farm people live is some-

HOME CONVENIENCES OF WHITE AND NEGRO YOUTH

WHITE

NEGRO

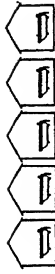
RADIO



ELECTRICITY



BATHROOM



AUTOMOBILE



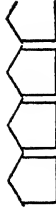
CENTRAL
HEATING



PIANO



NO CONVENIENCES



1

EACH FIGURE REPRESENTS 5% OF THE HOMES OF EACH RACIAL GROUP

thing to think about. One could hardly suggest viewing the situation with alarm, for the facts simply aren't the startling kind. In fact, they are very dull indeed.

One farm youth in nine enjoys no conveniences at all.

Six of every seven do not enjoy the comforts of central heating.

One out of every two lives in a home that has no radio, and the same proportion does not subscribe to any magazines.

The homes of two out of every three have no electricity.

Only one in every five has a bathroom, but

Three out of every four have automobiles.

Comparison of Conveniences Enjoyed by Married and Single Youth

From every point of view, it seems that single youth have the advantage of more conveniences than married youth can afford. This reflects the difference in the

TABLE 5—CONVENIENCES AVAILABLE AT THE YOUTH'S RESIDENCE AND THOSE HOMES HAVING NO CONVENIENCES WHATEVER

Classification of youth	Percentage of each group						
	No conveniences	Electricity	Radio	Bath-room	Magazines (subscribed)	Auto-mobile	Central heating
All youth.....	4.5	78.7	78.1	64.4	56.8	55.4	49.1
City.....	1.1	96.2	90.0	86.3	53.4	41.2	64.2
Town.....	2.3	92.2	86.5	81.8	71.6	61.8	67.4
Village.....	6.1	79.4	76.6	51.9	60.1	62.4	42.7
Farm.....	11.1	33.2	50.0	21.8	52.1	74.3	13.6
Single.....	3.8	80.4	80.7	67.2	61.3	56.2	51.6
Married.....	7.0	74.0	70.4	56.0	42.7	53.5	40.9
White.....	1.2	84.3	85.4	70.7	63.2	60.5	54.8
Negro.....	22.5	47.6	38.2	30.2	21.7	27.8	17.3
Employed.....	5.1	75.5	76.0	60.4	56.2	55.9	45.2
Unemployed.....	6.2	78.3	75.2	62.1	44.9	41.9	43.2
White nonrelief.....	0.7	86.1	88.1	73.5	66.9	63.7	58.2
White relief.....	6.4	70.4	64.0	47.0	32.7	33.4	27.1
Negro nonrelief.....	21.7	48.6	40.3	31.4	25.2	31.7	20.3
Negro relief.....	25.5	46.5	32.9	27.3	11.6	15.8	8.8
Father's occupation:							
Professional-technical.....	0.3	98.0	95.5	94.7	86.0	73.1	86.7
Office-sales.....	0.5	95.9	94.0	86.7	75.3	60.8	76.5
Managerial.....	0.8	95.6	94.0	88.3	75.7	70.7	74.3
Skilled.....	1.0	92.8	88.6	78.8	56.7	49.6	58.9
Semi-skilled.....	2.7	89.5	83.7	62.5	45.0	38.8	42.8
Domestic-personal.....	6.8	82.7	74.6	66.2	46.9	33.5	43.2
Unskilled.....	11.8	63.4	57.2	38.4	28.1	28.3	19.9
Farm laborer.....	35.7	20.6	15.8	6.2	15.4	36.1	4.0

HOME CONVENIENCES OF WHITE AND NEGRO YOUTH

WHITE

NEGRO

RADIO



ELECTRICITY



BATHROOM



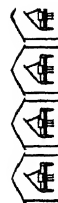
AUTOMOBILE



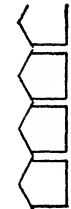
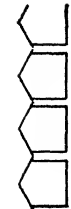
CENTRAL HEATING



PIANO



NO CONVENIENCES



EACH FIGURE REPRESENTS 5% OF THE HOMES OF EACH RACIAL GROUP

living conditions of the parental home and the youth's own home, which, at the outset, is usually on a lower level than that of his parents. It also reflects the fact that youth whose fathers are from the lower income levels tend to marry early, while those whose fathers are from the higher income levels tend to marry late. This means that differences in the extent to which married and unmarried youth enjoy certain conveniences, which may *seem* to be due to marriage are, to a degree, influenced by the more remote economic background of the youth's family.

Comparison of Conveniences Enjoyed by Relief and Nonrelief Groups

Using the possession or nonpossession of the above conveniences—one of the usual methods of measuring the economic level of the family—the comparison between relief and nonrelief families shows some striking and constant differences. Both on the basis of the percentage of youth living in quarters with *no* conveniences at all, and the percentage living in quarters having *all* the conveniences listed, the groups of youth fall into the following rank order.

1. Nonrelief white
2. Relief white
3. Nonrelief Negro
4. Relief Negro

Data in this field show that white youth from relief families enjoy definitely better quarters than Negro youth from nonrelief families. With respect to no conveniences, or to electricity, radio, and bathroom, there is a wider gap separating the white relief group and the Negro nonrelief group than there is between the Negro who is on relief and the Negro who is not.

SOME IDEAS YOUTH HAVE ABOUT HOMES OF THEIR OWN

If the capacity of the home to hold its youth, as indicated at the beginning of this chapter, is added to the expressed desires of young people eventually to have homes of their own, it would seem that there is plenty of vitality left in this much challenged institution.

DO YOUTH WANT HOMES OF THEIR OWN?

Only 3 per cent of the single youth now living at home expressed a preference for living away from home. Only 8 per cent of all youth interviewed said that they had no desire eventually to have children. Between this expressed satisfaction with the parental home, and this apparent enthusiasm for homes of their own, the continued existence of the family as the fundamental social unit seems reasonably well assured.

DO HOMES OF YOUTH HAVE MODERN CONVENIENCES ?

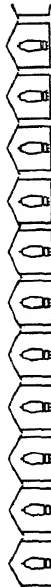
FARM YOUTH

CITY YOUTH

AUTOMOBILE



RADIO



ELECTRICITY



PIANO



BATHROOM



CENTRAL
HEATING



NO
CONVENIENCES



EACH FIGURE REPRESENTS 8 % OF THE HOMES OF THE YOUTH IN EACH AREA GROUP

There seems to be no very important difference between the boys' and the girls' desire for children—84 per cent of the boys wanted eventually to have at least one, while 89 per cent of the girls expressed the same desire. The fact that this friendly attitude toward the eventuality of being mothers and fathers is stronger among the older members of each sex group than among the younger ones would tend to support the sincerity of their responses to this question. Both the young men and the young women in the age group 21 through 24 years were generally more desirous of having children eventually than was the case with the youth between the ages of 16 and 20. If this means anything, it means that the closer, in terms of years, youth come to parenthood, the better it looks to them. From all appearances, it would seem that both the home and the race are fairly safe.

THE "IDEAL" NUMBER OF CHILDREN

We not only discovered whether or not our young person wanted, eventually, to have children, but we also found out the number he would like to have "if circumstances were ideal." One thing upon which the great majority of youth agreed: they wanted fewer children than their parents had.

On the basis of the 11,707 youth who indicated the number of children which they considered ideal (including the 1,057 who desired no children at all), we have the following median number of children desired by different groups of youth.

TABLE 6—MEDIAN NUMBER OF
CHILDREN DESIRED

Classification of youth	Median number of children youth desire
All youth.....	2.7
Farm.....	2.8
Village.....	2.7
Town.....	2.7
City.....	2.7
Male white.....	2.7
Male Negro.....	2.5
Female white.....	2.8
Female Negro.....	2.5
Jewish.....	3.0
Catholic.....	2.9
Protestant.....	2.7
Mixed affiliations.....	2.7
No affiliation.....	2.6
Male single.....	2.7
Male married.....	2.6
Female single.....	2.8
Female married.....	2.7

WHAT IS THE IDEAL NUMBER OF CHILDREN?

OPINIONS OF MALES

OPINIONS OF FEMALES

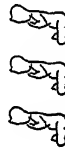
TWO



THREE



FOUR



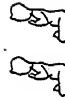
ONE



FIVE
OR MORE



NONE



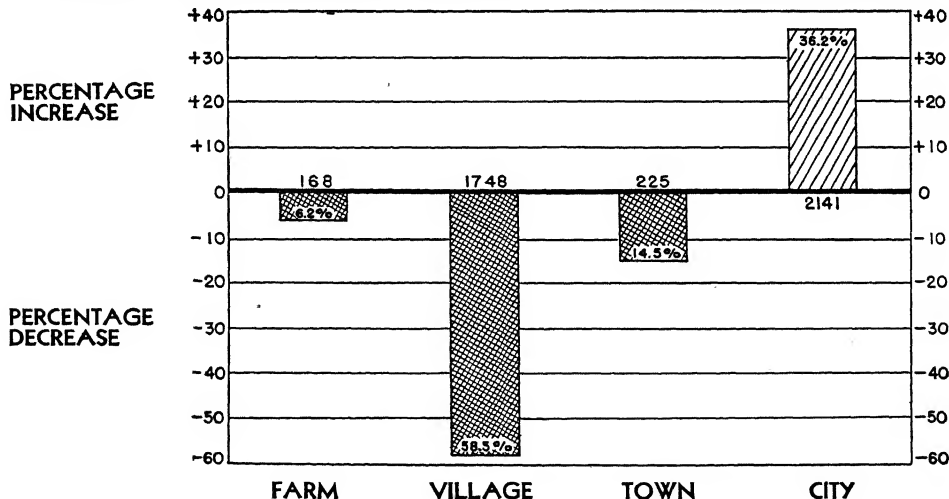
EACH COMPLETE FIGURE REPRESENTS 4% OF EACH SEX GROUP WHO WANTED SPECIFIED NUMBER OF CHILDREN

The figures in Table 6 suggest that young people have a way of looking askance upon the size of their parents' families. It will be remembered that the median number of living children in the parental family is 4.7. The "ideal" number for all the groups of youth who expressed an opinion is exactly two less than this number—an extremely significant difference. Whether or not circumstances will permit youth to realize this, along with their other ideals, is, of course, conjectural. About all that seems certain is that, generally speaking, they want fewer children than their parents have had. The difference between the median number of children the youth of certain groups desire, and the median number their parents had, may be found by comparing Table 6 with Table 3 on page 23.

WHERE YOUTH PREFER TO LIVE

"If the opportunity for choice presented itself, where would you prefer to live?" The expressed preferences of the youth responding to this question betray what appear to be some interesting potential trends.

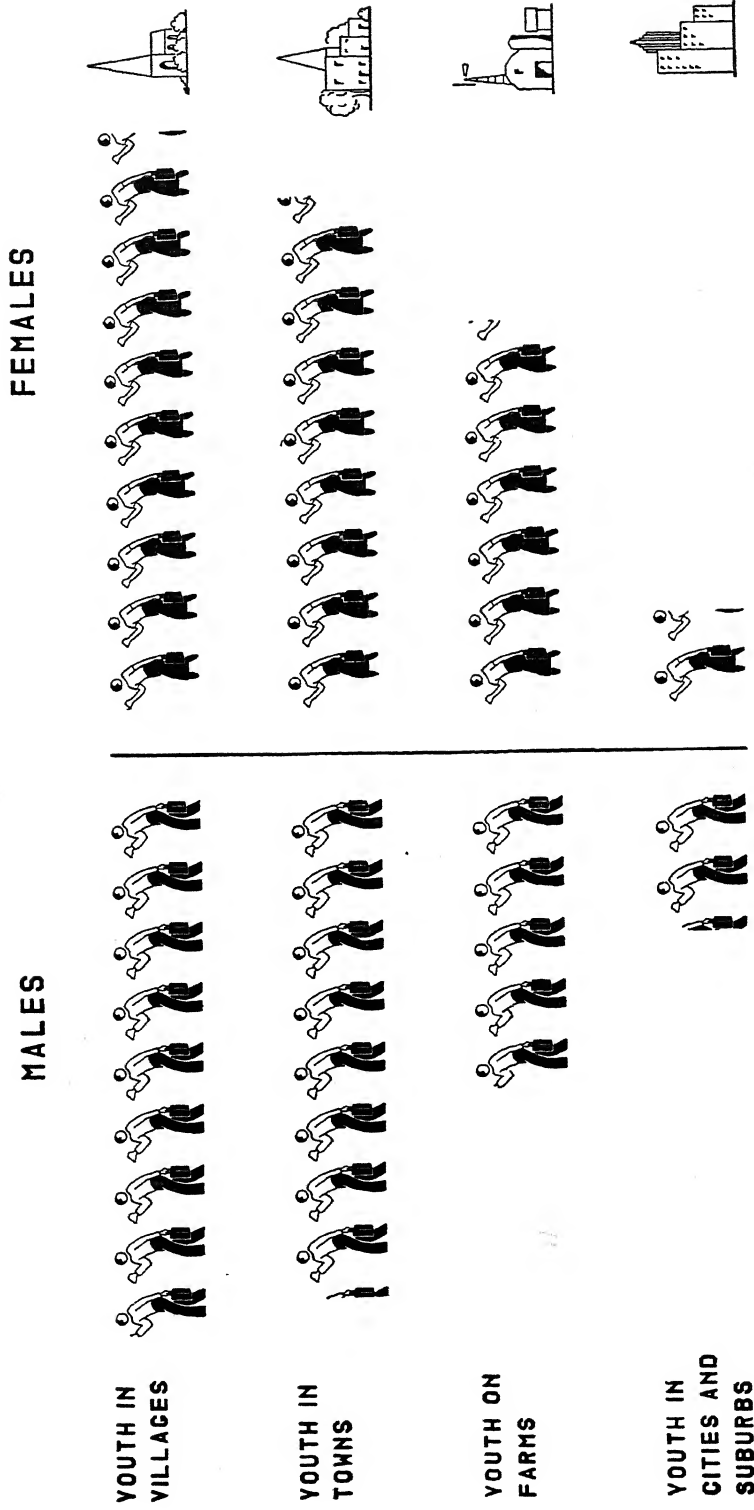
FIGURE 5
NET CHANGE IN RESIDENCE OF YOUTH IF THEY LIVED
WHERE THEY WANTED TO
(NUMBER AND PERCENTAGE CHANGE IN RESIDENCE OF 13,185 FARM AND NONFARM YOUTH)



Three of the most obvious preferences, or prejudices, and possibly the three most reliable indications as to future population trends, are listed below.

1. There is least satisfaction among residents of villages (2,500 population or less). Village youth seem to welcome few things with as much enthusiasm as the possibility of moving somewhere else. In fact, three out of every four say that they would move if they could.

TO WHAT EXTENT ARE YOUTH DISSATISFIED WITH WHERE THEY LIVE ?



EACH COMPLETE FIGURE REPRESENTS THE RESPONSES OF 8 % OF EACH AREA -SEX GROUP

2. Almost half of the youth living on farms (46 per cent) indicated that they would prefer to live somewhere else.

3. Regardless of whether youth are living on farms, in villages, towns, or cities, the greatest preference is shown for cities and the suburbs of metropolitan areas.

On the basis of the 13,185 youth who expressed a preference, the *net loss* would be 225 for the towns, 168 for the farms, and 1,748 for the villages. The net gain for the city and suburbs represents the sum of all these losses, or 2,141. Reduced to percentages, these figures indicate that, *if youth were free to live wherever they wished*, the towns (that is, communities with a population of 2,500 to 25,000) would lose 14.5 per cent of their youth populations, the farms would lose 6.2 per cent, and the villages would lose 58.5 per cent, or almost six out of every ten!

So far as these expressed preferences go, it would seem that the urbanization of our population is as yet an uncompleted trend. The "back to the farm" movement may have a powerful appeal to harassed and depression-sick breadwinners, but it seems to have made very little impression on the younger generation.

SOURCES OF SEX INFORMATION

The extent to which a young person is intellectually and emotionally prepared for marriage will be largely determined by the validity of the sex information he has acquired, the manner in which it has been conveyed, and the source from which it has come. Only three out of every ten youth reported that they received most of their sex knowledge from parents or relatives. Here again there seems to be a stronger inclination on the part of the girls to discuss intimate personal matters with their parents—the difference being almost three to one in favor of the girls (45.1 per cent as against 16.8 per cent). The home is reported as the chief source of sex information about twice as frequently by the white youth (33 per cent) as by the Negro (18 per cent). Considering this matter from the point of view of religious affiliation, it appears that the Protestant home ranks highest with 32 per cent, the Catholic home taking a middle position with 29 per cent, while the Jewish home takes the lowest rank with 17 per cent.

The chief source of sex "education" for the youth of all ages and all religious groups was found to be the youth's contemporaries. Both the amount and the accuracy of this information were influenced, therefore, by the relative immaturity of the youth's friends who volunteered it. Sixty-six per cent of the boys and 40 per cent of the girls reported that what they knew about sex was more or less limited to what their friends of their own age had told them.

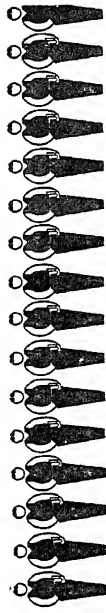
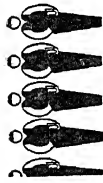
After "contemporaries" and the youth's home, the source that is next in importance is the school, from which about 8 per cent of the young people reported they had received most of their sex information. A few, about 4 per cent, reported that

THE CHIEF SOURCE OF SEX EDUCATION- HOME OR STREET ?

YOUTH WHO GOT SEX EDUCATION
FROM THEIR PARENTS

YOUTH WHO GOT SEX EDUCATION
FROM THEIR "CONTEMPORARIES"

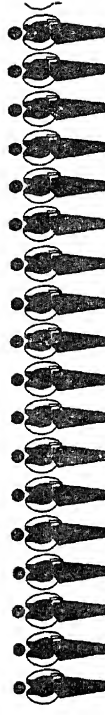
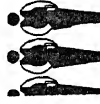
WHITE
MALE



WHITE
FEMALE



NEGRO
MALE



NEGRO
FEMALE



EACH FIGURE REPRESENTS 5% OF THE RESPONSES OF EACH RACE-SEX GROUP

they owed most to books, while less than 1 per cent asserted that they had acquired most of their information from movies. Exactly the same proportion specified the church as the chief source of their sex information.

The great variety of sources from which the "sex education" of our youth has come is exceeded only by the varying degrees of accuracy and completeness of their information. Perhaps the most effective way to reveal this diversity of sources is to let a few youth speak for themselves.

"I got it out in the street."

"Just from different talk around. My mother never would tell me anything."

"I've had a car since I was sixteen, so you know what that is."

"Bull sessions."

"From the gang I hang with."

"In the gutter, where everybody else gets theirs."

"I learned by experience."

"On the street corner."

"In Girl Scouts we used to try to find out things, and the leader would look prissy and say 'a Girl Scout is clean in thought, word, and deed.' That's not right. That's why people learn in bad ways."

"I got an earful here and an earful there."

"My mother is one of those old timers who believe in letting you find things out for yourself."

"Out of the gutter. My mother is the most innocent person you ever saw."

"When I was thirteen, mother told me everything about it."

"My mother and I are just like girl friends."

Large numbers of youth had received little or no sex information from any source.

"I found out when I started to have 'em [babies]."

"Before I got married, I thought babies came from hospitals."

"When I was married, I was dumb as a doorknob."

"The only thing I know is what I hear people say—that you buy babies from a doctor."

Assuming that it is generally more desirable for young people to acquire a knowledge of sex matters from their homes than from contemporaries on street corners, some basis for optimism can be found in the fact that a substantially larger proportion of the youth from the younger age groups reported the home as the chief source of sex information than was the case for the older youth. This would indicate that parents of this generation may be more intelligently alive to their responsibility in this matter than were the parents of some ten years ago. Even so, the fact that only six out of every ten youth of 16 years of age received most of their sex information from their parents is itself a socially significant thing. It is true that modern parents are more actively helpful in this respect than the parents of the preceding generation, but it is quite obvious that they still are decidedly remiss in what should be one of their primary duties to their children.

MARRIED YOUTH

WHEN DO YOUTH MARRY?

At a time when there is considerable concern over the matter of child marriages, it will be of interest to point to the fact that, of the 2,177 young women who were married, 382, or about 18 per cent, had married while or before they were 16 years of age. One of these had married when she was 10, another at 11, and two others at 12. The median marrying age for the girls was not quite 19. The boys tended to marry considerably later, with a median marrying age of slightly over 21 years.

TABLE 7—AGE OF MALE AND FEMALE YOUTH AT TIME OF MARRIAGE

Age at time of marriage	Percentage of youth		Number of youth	
	Male	Female	Male	Female
10.....		<i>a</i>		1
11.....		<i>a</i>		1
12.....		0.1		2
13.....		0.6		12
14.....		1.7		36
15.....	0.5	5.7	4	125
16.....	1.8	9.4	16	205
17.....	3.5	16.1	31	350
18.....	8.3	18.5	73	403
19.....	14.9	16.5	131	360
20.....	19.3	14.0	170	305
21.....	22.7	7.8	199	169
22.....	14.9	5.6	131	121
23.....	9.8	3.0	86	65
24.....	4.3	1.0	38	22
Total.....	100.0	100.0	879	2,177
Median age.....	21.1	18.9		

^a Less than 0.05 per cent.

That many youth would marry at earlier ages if circumstances would permit is suggested by the fact that about one out of every five, over 20 years of age, reported that his or her marriage had been delayed. More than half of this group gave some economic reason as the cause of the delay, while the others reported such causes as no opportunity, family objections, or personal illness.

DO MARRIED YOUTH HAVE HOMES OF THEIR OWN?

Perhaps the most significant fact with respect to the conditions under which married youth are living has already been referred to—that almost half of our married subjects (46.4 per cent for young men and 40.2 per cent for young women) were found to be residing with their parents or other relatives. Exactly how much

of this "doubling up" has been the result of the depression's pinch, and how much has been voluntary, we do not know. We do know, however, that a substantial number of our young married people regarded the matter of getting a home of their own as their most perplexing personal problem.

Those who believe that there are few homes large enough for two families, and who also feel that such crowding has undesirable psychological effects upon both parents and children, will be inclined to regard this "doubling up" situation as unfortunate. Yet it is probable that the bad effects of crowding are not only psychological but social as well. There is a considerable body of evidence to suggest the existence of a high correlation between two-family homes and the delinquent behavior of the children living in them.

It would seem that any plan designed to improve the lot of married youth will have to go deeper than any educational, social, or recreational "programs." Important as these are, it is unlikely that any remedy is likely to be very effective which fails to deal realistically with the need for low-cost housing units for young married people who are unable to enjoy the social and psychological benefits of living independently in homes of their own.

RELATION OF YOUTH'S MARRYING AGE TO FAMILY INCOME

It has already been seen that the lower the family income, the sooner the youth leave school—and, as indicated by Table 8, the sooner they marry.

TABLE 8—YOUTH WHO ARE MARRIED, ACCORDING
TO THEIR FATHERS' USUAL OCCUPATIONS

Father's occupation	Percentage of all youth, with father in given occupation, who are married	Present median age of all youth
Professional-technical.....	15.8	20.7
Managerial.....	16.6	20.6
Office.....	17.8	20.2
Sales.....	19.2	20.6
Skilled.....	22.3	20.0
Domestic-personal.....	22.9	20.3
Semi-skilled.....	23.4	19.7
Farm owner-tenant.....	26.2	20.9
Unskilled.....	29.4	20.4
Farm laborer.....	34.5	21.0

These data indicate that youth whose fathers are unskilled or farm laborers are twice as likely to marry before they are 25 years old as are those whose fathers are engaged in the professions (34.5 per cent as against 15.8 per cent). In fact, there seems to be a clear-cut relationship between early marriages and low family incomes. The fact that the median age of the youth at the time of the interview was

HOW MANY CHILDREN DO MARRIED YOUTH HAVE ? *

WHITE

NEGRO

NONE



ONE



TWO



THREE



FOUR
OR MORE



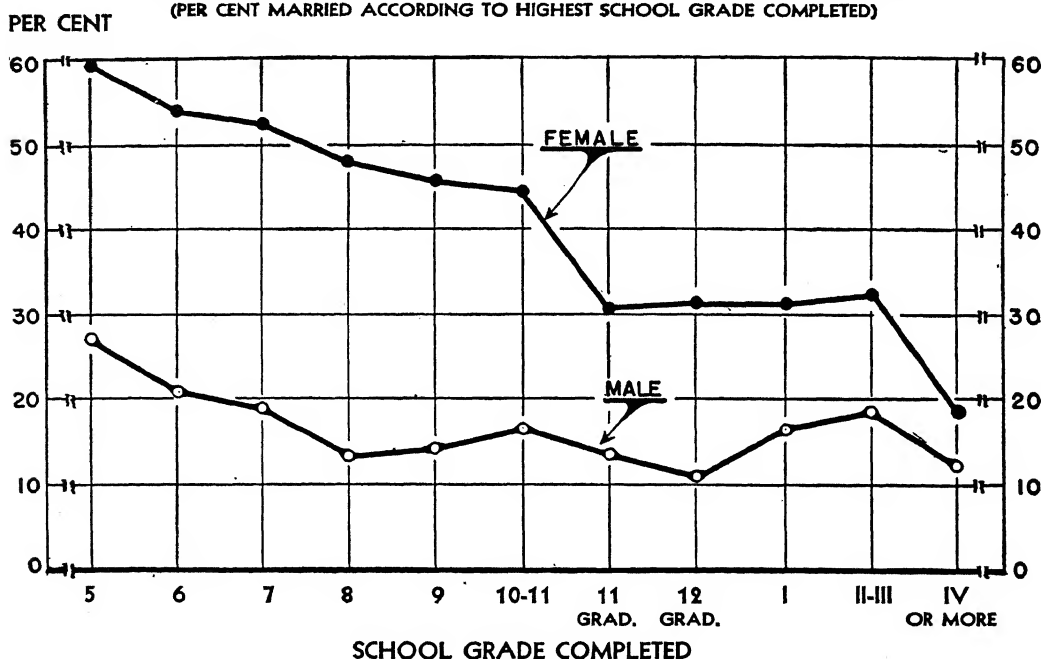
* 120 YOUTH WERE FOUND TO BE UNMARRIED PARENTS-85. OR 70% OF THESE WERE NEGROES
EACH FIGURE REPRESENTS 5% OF EACH RACE GROUP HAVING SPECIFIED NUMBER OF CHILDREN

practically the same for the children of fathers in all the occupational groups suggests that the economic background of the family operates as an independent factor in determining whether youth marry or not.

RELATION OF SCHOOL GRADE ATTAINMENT TO MARITAL STATUS

It also appears from our data that a relationship exists between the school grades young people have attained and the age at which they marry. Generally speaking, it can be said that the less schooling a youth has had, the sooner he is likely to marry. How much of this tendency is due to the fact that the youth who leaves

FIGURE 6
EXTENT OF MARRIAGE AMONG OUT-OF-SCHOOL YOUTH
(PER CENT MARRIED ACCORDING TO HIGHEST SCHOOL GRADE COMPLETED)



school at a relatively low level has usually had more time and thought to give to the matter of marriage, and how much of it is due to education as such, we are not, of course, in a position to say.

The inverse relationship between the number of grades youth have completed in school and the percentage of each grade group that was married is considerably more pronounced for the females than for the males. As indicated by Figure 6, more than half the girls who had completed less than the six grades were married, while slightly less than one-fourth of the boys who left school at the same level had the same status. (Two-thirds of this less-than-sixth-grade group were Negroes.) Yet with both sexes, the proportion who were married decreased as the grade level increased, in

spite of the fact that the present median age of each group was almost the same. That the median age of those who had received some college education was higher than the median age of those who had completed lesser grades might lead one to expect that a larger proportion of college youth would have married. The facts, however, are the reverse.

SUMMARY

In this welter of varied information about the home life of young people, one is tempted to probe for a few underlying and fundamental realities. Although it is dangerous to generalize about social phenomena, it is always exciting and sometimes profitable to look for the forces that make things as they are.

Those whose curiosity and patience have seen them through what may have seemed a somewhat arid wasteland of facts and figures were perhaps impressed by the consistency with which different sets of these facts and figures have been related to each other. So far as we are concerned, the net effect of these consistent relationships has been to arouse the suspicion that underneath the placid surface of our social scheme of things there operates a striking concurrence of social and economic forces that tends to freeze social levels and groups into a sort of perennial *status quo*.

The idea that such a "conspiracy" may exist in our democratic land will doubtless offend many people who have been nourished on the American tradition of free enterprise, and who have been led to suspect that low beginnings are a sort of open sesame to an abundant adult life. In fact, the suggestion that there can exist any barrier between the vaulting aspirations of the young and the eventual success of the adult may be regarded by some as definitely subversive and un-American.

Yet, a detached and dispassionate consideration of the data that have just been analyzed emphatically points to both the existence of such forces and to the depressing effects they are having on a large proportion of our youth population. How to reduce this cause and effect relationship to a phrase that is neither trite nor meaningless is not an easy task. What it seems to amount to is a sort of vicious circle of economic determinism.

The first step in the business of exploring the circumference of a circle is to choose a point at which to begin. In this "circle of economic determinism," let us begin with the youth's father—the older generation. Let us assume, for this first whirl around the circle, that the father is employed in one of the lower occupational groups. Let us say that he is an unskilled or farm laborer. Although we have acquired no data on the father's income in this study, we know, from a great variety of responsible sources, that the income of unskilled and farm laborers is not only relatively but actually low.

Another significant thing that we know about this low-income father is that he

is apt to have a relatively large number of children—about twice as many, in fact, as the father who is engaged in one of the professions.

Follow this chronological circle around to the next generation. At this point, we find youth whose educational and vocational opportunities have been adversely affected by both the low income of their fathers and the relatively large number of their brothers and sisters. These two forces of low income and large families tend to cut short the period in which the youth is encouraged to train for his own future. They operate to force him out of school, into work, and into marriage, at a relatively early age.

Most that has happened to the youth of this large low-income family has tended to hold him in pretty much the same kind of social and economic vise that has gripped his father. He has had comparatively little education, and we know (and will reveal in a later chapter) that low grade attainment is associated with low wages. He has married at a relatively early age. Although he has indicated that the “ideal” number of children is substantially less than the number his parents had, it is a presentable assumption that the same social, economic, and perhaps psychological forces that operated to leave his low-income father with a large family will continue to operate with him. And so begins the second dismal swing around the same vicious circle. And so, *ad infinitum*.

As indicated elsewhere, there are at least two ways of blasting this circle. One of these is to recognize the state or community responsibility to the youth in families whose incomes are too low to provide opportunities for such growth and development as is fundamental to a healthy and enduring democracy. And the other is to clarify, through both youth and adult education, the usual consequences that are visited upon the individual child when the family’s income and the family’s size are inadequately adjusted to each other.

What is clearly needed is more effective educational, vocational, and recreational programs for *all* youth. In the development of such programs there are two points of attack. One of these is toward the development of programs that are more realistically adjusted to the needs and interests of the young people they are intended to serve, while the other is toward a more general equalization of educational, vocational, and recreational opportunities.

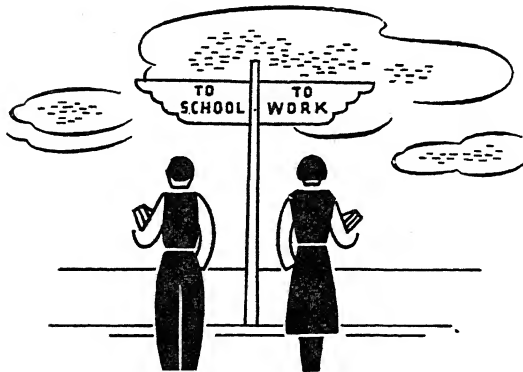
Those who are impelled to question the wisdom of building a youth program on so wide and deep a base may recall with profit the fact that many of the social and political structures that ardent lovers of democracy deplore have been reared from the bedrock of a discontented and disillusioned generation of youth.

There are said to be many things that a democracy must have, or die. One of these things, we suspect, is a social order enriched with enough generosity and foresight to provide all its youth with opportunities to grow, and endowed with enough wisdom and courage to make these opportunities worth the taking.

CHAPTER 3

★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★

Y O U T H A N D T H E S C H O O L



THERE are many kinds of educational surveys, differing primarily in the manner of approach. Among others, there is the survey that studies educational programs by going to the schools, to the teachers and superintendents. And there is the one that approaches education from the angle of those who are going, or who have gone, through the educational mill.

A Commission sponsored survey of the Baltimore and the Maryland school systems has already been made by Frank W. Wright and Payson Smith, who adopted the first approach. They went direct to the schools, talked with teachers and superintendents, and studied school records and reports. The result was an interesting and valuable report on the educational program in the state, followed by sympathetic evaluations and pertinent recommendations.

The present study of the educational program follows the second approach. It is believed that such an approach yields results that are less distinctly local in character, and uncovers conditions more likely to be found elsewhere in the United States. Provided always that the sample of the youth studied is essentially national in character, the facts uncovered can be accepted as having national implications. And, as previously indicated, it is with the national implications, and not the local peculiarities, that the staff of the Commission is primarily concerned.

So, in approaching this vitally important area of the youth's school life, we went, as usual, to the youth themselves. A glance at Table 1 (page 12) will show that, when the last federal census was taken in 1930, 19 per cent of the youth of America between the ages of 16 and 24 were in schools or colleges. In our sample, the percentage of school youth was 19.4, a difference of only 0.4 per cent. While going through these school data, it will be well to remember therefore that about four out of every five youth considered were permanently out of school.

So far as these out-of-school youth are concerned, our interest will be to discover what the schools have done, what the youth's reactions to their past education have been, and what, if anything, there was in the economic, domestic, or social conditions under which they lived that tended to affect, for better or worse, the quality and quantity of the education they received.

YOUTH IN SCHOOL

AGE DISTRIBUTION OF STUDENTS

Before going into an analysis of what are probably the more socially significant data on the out-of-school group, let us survey briefly the 2,600 students who were

still in school. The following table shows a progressive decline in the proportion of students in each age group.

TABLE 9—AGE DISTRIBUTION OF THE STUDENTS INTERVIEWED

Age at last birthday	Percentage of all students interviewed
16.....	38.0
17.....	22.9
18.....	13.6
19.....	9.0
20.....	6.7
21.....	4.6
22.....	2.7
23.....	1.6
24.....	0.9
All students.....	100.0
Number of youth.....	2,620

Table 9 not only shows a decrease in the proportion of the youth in each age group who are in school, but also shows that about three out of every four students within our age span are either 16, 17, or 18 years old.

SEX, RACE, AND PLACE OF RESIDENCE

Of the 2,600 students interviewed, there was a larger proportion of boys than girls (54 per cent as against 46 per cent). This distribution is clearly an error in sampling, as it is known that there is a larger proportion of girls than boys in school. This sampling error, however, is not so serious as to affect substantially the findings for the group.

It is interesting to note that, while over 15 per cent of all youth interviewed were Negroes, less than 9 per cent of the students were of this race. Similarly, while 21 per cent of the total group lived on farms, less than 12 per cent of the students were farm youth. Although a part of this difference in the proportions of farm and of Negro youth who are in school can be explained by the fact that the median age of each of these groups was about a year higher than that of the group as a whole, this age difference is hardly a complete explanation. It will be shown later that the youth from both these groups leave school at a relatively early age, and at a relatively low grade level.

THE KIND OF SCHOOL

To those who may be interested in the type of school the students were attending, the following table will be significant.

TABLE 10—KIND OF SCHOOL STUDENTS
WERE ATTENDING

Type of school	Percentage of student youth interviewed
Public school:.....	63.3
Senior high.....	54.4
Junior high.....	4.2
Vocational.....	3.2
Elementary.....	1.5
Private school:.....	12.7
Catholic.....	6.3
Vocational: nonsectarian.....	4.7
Academic: nonsectarian.....	1.1
Protestant.....	0.6
College.....	23.8
Unknown.....	0.2
All students.....	100.0

About two out of every three students were in some kind of public school below the college grade—more than half, in fact, in a public high school. About one in eight (an unusually large proportion) was attending some kind of private school, and almost one out of every four (23.8 per cent) was in college.

EMPLOYED STUDENTS

A substantial proportion of the student group was interviewed during the summer months. In fact, six out of every ten were reached while they were on their summer vacations. Of these 1,600 youth so interviewed, about one out of every four (23.1 per cent) was found to be employed on some part-time, or full-time, vacation job. This suggests that about a fourth of the present-day students, 16 years of age or over, find some sort of summer work. What it cannot show is the group that needed or wanted summer work but could not find it. Also indicated by our data is the fact that over 15 per cent of the students had some kind of employment while their schools were in session. Of this 15 per cent, exactly one-fifth were receiving assistance from the National Youth Administration.

OUT-OF-SCHOOL YOUTH

CHARACTERISTICS OF OUT-OF-SCHOOL YOUTH

We now come to a consideration of that large majority of young people of our age group who are permanently beyond the influence of the school. For them, formal school education is an experience, the recollection of which produces feelings that vary from joy to despair. The impressions that schools leave with the youth exposed to them vary as profoundly as the youth themselves. While one young woman 23 years old reports that "my education has been everything in my life," another of the same age insists that "years spent in school are the worst total loss in the world."

Before going further into the impressions that formal school education leaves with those who have passed beyond its influence, it will be profitable to examine, as we already have done with our students, some of the essential characteristics of this out-of-school group.

Present Age of the Youth Who Had Completed Various Grades

In presenting a picture of the out-of-school group, a logical place to begin is with the median age of the youth who had completed the various school grades. Table 11 shows the median age of youth of various grade levels, *at the time of the interview*.

TABLE 11—MEDIAN AGE OF ALL OUT-OF-SCHOOL
YOUTH—AT TIME OF INTERVIEW

Grade completed	Median age
Less than 6th grade.....	21.9
6th.....	21.3
7th.....	20.8
8th.....	20.3
9th.....	20.3
10th or 11th not graduate.....	20.7
11th grade graduate ^a	20.6
12th grade graduate.....	20.9
1 year beyond high school graduation.....	21.9
2 or 3 years beyond graduation.....	23.0
4 or more years beyond graduation.....	23.3

^a Certain of the county schools have seven-year elementary and four-year high school courses, so that a youth graduates from high school after completing eleven grades.

With the exception of the youth who had gone two or more years beyond high school, there are but slight differences in the median ages of the various grade groups. It is important to keep this similarity of the present age of these groups in mind, because it establishes the fact that the differences to be discussed later in this chapter are related to the differences in the school grades youth have completed, and *not* to the differences in the ages they have attained.

The Proportions of Youth of Different Ages Who Are Out of School

More than a third (34 per cent) of our 16-year-old youth had left school. From this age on, the proportion of each age group that had left steadily increased.

TABLE 12—PROPORTION OF YOUTH OF EACH AGE GROUP WHO ARE PERMANENTLY OUT OF SCHOOL

Age at last birthday	Percentage of each age group	Percentage base
16.....	34.1	1,514
17.....	57.7	1,421
18.....	76.1	1,483
19.....	85.8	1,656
20.....	89.3	1,642
21.....	92.5	1,616
22.....	95.0	1,398
23.....	96.5	1,240
24.....	98.5	1,543
Total.....	80.6	13,513

Over one-half of the 17-year-olds, and over three-fourths of the 18-year-olds, are permanently out of school. Where are they? Data to be submitted later show that only one-third of them are employed on full-time (thirty or more hours a week) jobs.

ARE YOUTH EDUCATED?

The belief that the actual efficiency, as well as the ultimate destiny, of a democracy rests, in the last analysis, with the capacity of the electorate to deal intelligently and realistically with national problems is hardly a novel one. It was this belief that prompted us to commit ourselves, as a nation, to universal and free education for all our youth.

Grades Completed by Out-of-School Youth

If future citizens in a democracy fail to receive from their schools the training necessary to function as such, it is difficult to imagine from what other source in our present social scheme this training is to come. It is altogether pertinent therefore to ask the question: To what extent have our youth, who are out of school, been educated? A study of the highest school grades youth have completed is one means of throwing light on this question.

Table 13 reveals the proportions of out-of-school youth who had attained the various grade levels from less than the sixth to the senior year in college. It further reveals that four out of every ten youth had never gone beyond the eighth grade.

Reduced to their simplest terms, these data indicate that out of every *twenty* youth between the years of 16 and 24 who had permanently left school:

Eight never got beyond the eighth grade,
Five entered high school but did not graduate,
Five left school after high school graduation, and
Two received some education beyond high school.

These school data further disclose that the median grade attainment of the out-of-school youth is approximately the *completion* of the ninth grade. What one's reaction to this fact will be depends largely upon the point of view one takes. Although

TABLE 13—HIGHEST GRADE SUCCESSFULLY COMPLETED
BY OUT-OF-SCHOOL YOUTH

School grade completed	Percentage of youth
8th grade or below:.....	39.1
Less than 6th.....	6.8
6th.....	6.8
7th.....	14.0
8th.....	11.5
9th, 10th, or 11th grade:.....	23.7
9th.....	9.8
10th or 11th.....	13.9
11th or 12th graduate*:.....	26.5
11th grade graduate.....	9.2
12th grade graduate.....	17.3
Beyond high school:.....	10.7
1 year beyond high school graduation.....	3.3
2 or 3 years beyond high school graduation.....	3.8
4 or more years beyond high school graduation.....	3.6
All out-of-school youth.....	100.0
Percentage base.....	10,898

* Graduates of schools with seven-year elementary and four-year high school courses.

it is definitely known that American youth are receiving more schooling than they ever received before, it can hardly be assumed that the elementary school, plus one year in high school, is able either to unroll the "ample page" of learning or to train for effective citizenship.

The Social Value of Expanded Educational Programs

United States Office of Education data reveal that, in 1910, 15 per cent of the American youth of high school age were actually in high schools. By 1930, the percentage had jumped to 54. From less than two, to more than five, out of every ten is

a profoundly significant change, and it is well to keep in mind that this change took place before the depression began to force into the schools more and more youth who would, under normal conditions, have found a place in business or industry. The trend is clearly in the right direction.

The need for continuing this trend toward a higher educational level of all our youth arises from something deeper than any philosophic enthusiasm for education, and even deeper than the conviction that, in our present social scheme, only the nation's schools are equipped to provide the training in citizenship that is essential if citizens are to function in a democracy. It goes down to the bedrock of reality—the fact that there are hundreds of thousands of youth in the United States whom circumstances have forced into the role of dawdling spectators. Against their will, they are forced to watch a game they would prefer to play.

It would be extravagant to assume that any extension or revamping of our national educational program could, or should, be expected to absorb *all* these youth whose years are now being wasted in purposeless and profitless inactivity. But it is neither extravagant nor unreasonable to insist, however, that such an extension and such a revamping could play a very real and important part in the solution of the national youth problem. Aside from any feeling of social obligation to this army of “forgotten” youth, the contribution that the schools can make has the rare character of being both valuable and relatively inexpensive.

Factors Affecting the Amount of Schooling Youth Receive

With the general picture of the out-of-school youth's educational background in mind, it will be interesting to take a cursory glance at some of the factors that seem to influence educational progress. Table 14 brings together some significant data on grade attainment as they are related to a few of our basic social and economic groups.

These data suggest the extent to which the following factors are related to a youth's failure to go beyond the eighth grade in school:

Race. The probability that a Negro youth will *not* have gone beyond the eighth grade is twice as great as it is for the white youth.

Relief status. Almost exactly the same probability exists as between the relief and the nonrelief groups—68 per cent of the relief, as compared with 34 per cent of the nonrelief group, failed to go beyond the eighth grade.

Sex. A substantially larger proportion of boys than girls failed to go beyond the eighth grade—45 per cent as against 32 per cent.

Size of family. The larger the family, the greater the probability that the youth left school at the elementary school level. An examination of four family groups—families with one child, four children, seven children, and nine or more children—reveals that, as families increase in size, the proportion of youth who drop out of

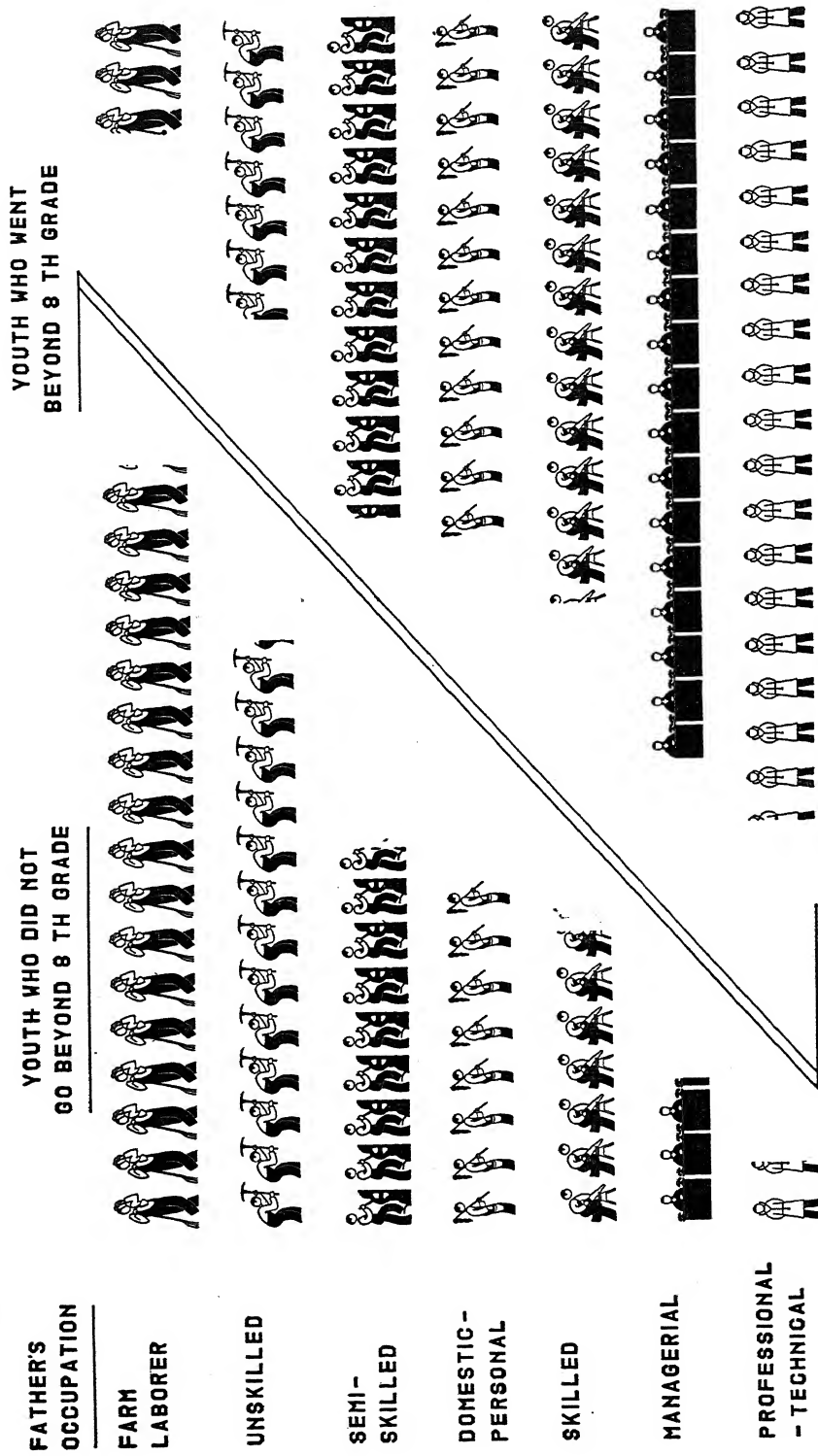
school at the elementary level increases accordingly. There is three times as great a probability that the youth from a family of nine or more children will *not* go beyond the eighth grade, as is the case with the youth from a one-child family.

TABLE 14—THE PERCENTAGES OF OUT-OF-SCHOOL YOUTH OF VARIOUS GROUPS WHO DID NOT GO BEYOND THE EIGHTH GRADE

Classification of youth	Percentage of each group
All nonstudents	39.1
Employed	37.2
Homemakers	41.9
Unemployed	42.6
White	33.2
Negro	68.4
Female	32.8
Male	45.4
Nonrelief	34.4
Relief	68.2
Number of living children in parental family:	
One	22.2
Four	35.0
Seven	52.4
Nine or more	66.1
Father's occupation:	
Professional-technical	7.6
Office	11.1
Sales	14.2
Managerial	16.2
Skilled	32.5
Domestic-personal	39.1
Semi-skilled	43.0
Farm owner-tenant	48.8
Unskilled	66.1
Farm laborer	86.3

Usual occupation of father. Of all the factors considered in the present study, probably the most potent one in determining a youth's grade attainment is his father's occupation. In only two of these occupational groups can the matter of race be regarded as a determining factor—the farm laborers and the domestic and personal. Seventy-four per cent of the fathers in the farm laborer group and 51 per cent in the domestic and personal group were Negroes, so that the findings with respect to these groups will necessarily reflect racial as well as occupational differences. In all the other groups, the proportion of Negroes is such as to eliminate race as an influential factor.

RELATION OF FATHERS' OCCUPATIONS TO THE AMOUNT OF EDUCATION THEIR CHILDREN RECEIVED



EACH FIGURE REPRESENTS 5% OF THE YOUTH WHOSE FATHERS WERE IN SPECIFIED OCCUPATIONAL GROUPS

With these qualifications in mind, one can attempt to appreciate the profound social significance of the data presented in Table 15.

TABLE 15—RELATION OF FATHERS' OCCUPATIONS TO
THE PROPORTIONS OF YOUTH WHO DID NOT GO
BEYOND THE EIGHTH GRADE

Father's occupation	Number of youth who did not go beyond 8th grade
Professional-technical.....	1 out of 13
Office.....	1 out of 9
Sales.....	1 out of 7
Managerial.....	1 out of 6
Skilled.....	1 out of 3
Domestic-personal.....	1 out of 2.5
Semi-skilled.....	1 out of 2.5
Farm owner-tenant.....	1 out of 2
Unskilled.....	2 out of 3
Farm laborer.....	7 out of 8

In another way, these ratios tell the same dismal story that was recounted in our discussion of the data on the youth's home. Unstable and poorly paid occupations—low incomes—large families—and definitely restricted educational opportunities—all of these factors working to hold the youth within the same circumscribed social, economic, and educational boundaries within which his father has lived. Seven out of every eight of the youth whose fathers were farm laborers, and two out of every three whose fathers were unskilled laborers, failed to go beyond the eighth grade, while only one out of every thirteen of the children of fathers engaged in the professions failed to go beyond the elementary school level.

Grades Attained by Youth in Various Groups

In the preceding section, we discussed some of the social and economic factors that seem to influence the matter of how far young people go in school. Our attention was focused on the extent to which certain groups fail to go beyond the eighth grade. At this point, we will try to discover the more exact level at which formal school education ended for such basic groups as the employed-unemployed, male-female, and white-Negro.

The following are a few of the outstanding implications of Table 16:

Sex. Generally speaking, the girls attained a higher school level than the boys, the former having an advantage at every level with the exception of the ninth, tenth, and eleventh grades, where no significant difference exists between the sexes.

Employment status. There are significantly *more* unemployed youth in the group which left school below the ninth grade, and significantly *fewer* unemployed in those who went beyond high school graduation.

TABLE 16—PROPORTIONS OF OUT-OF-SCHOOL YOUTH IN VARIOUS GROUPS WHO COMPLETED SPECIFIED GRADES

Classification of out-of-school youth	Percentage of youth who completed				
	8th grade or less	9th, 10th, or 11th grades	11th or 12th graduate	1, 2, or 3 years beyond graduation	4 or more years beyond graduation
All nonstudents.....	39.1	23.7	26.5	7.1	3.6
Male.....	45.4	24.4	22.2	4.8	3.2
Female.....	32.8	22.9	30.8	9.3	4.2
White.....	33.2	24.8	30.3	7.7	4.0
Negro.....	68.4	17.4	8.2	4.3	1.7
Employed.....	37.2	23.0	27.3	8.0	4.5
Unemployed.....	42.6	24.0	24.9	5.3	3.2
Homemakers.....	41.9	25.7	25.6	5.6	1.2
16-year-olds.....	62.2	28.0	9.8	—	—
18-year-olds.....	36.4	28.0	34.1	1.5	—
20-year-olds.....	33.7	24.9	32.5	7.1	1.8
22-year-olds.....	37.1	20.5	25.6	11.1	5.7
24-year-olds.....	41.9	16.8	20.4	12.1	8.8
Father's occupation:					
Professional-technical.....	7.6	14.7	32.8	23.8	21.1
Sales.....	14.2	24.9	40.2	14.9	5.8
Skilled.....	32.5	31.7	29.1	4.8	1.9
Farm owner-tenant.....	48.8	17.1	27.4	4.9	1.8
Unskilled.....	66.1	21.0	10.7	1.8	0.4

Usual occupation of father. Bearing out a point that has previously been made, the following condensed table reveals that, while only *four* out of every twenty youth whose fathers were professional-technical workers left school before high school graduation, *eighteen* out of every twenty whose fathers were unskilled laborers left before high school graduation. It will be observed that, although the two occupational groups that were unduly weighted with Negroes—the domestic-personal and the farm laborers—have been eliminated from this table, the trend remains unchanged.

TABLE 17—RELATION OF FATHERS' OCCUPATIONS TO THE PROPORTIONS OF YOUTH WHO DID NOT COMPLETE HIGH SCHOOL

Father's occupation	Number of youth who left before high school graduation
Professional-technical.....	4 out of 20
Sales.....	8 out of 20
Skilled.....	13 out of 20
Farm owner-tenant.....	13 out of 20
Unskilled.....	18 out of 20

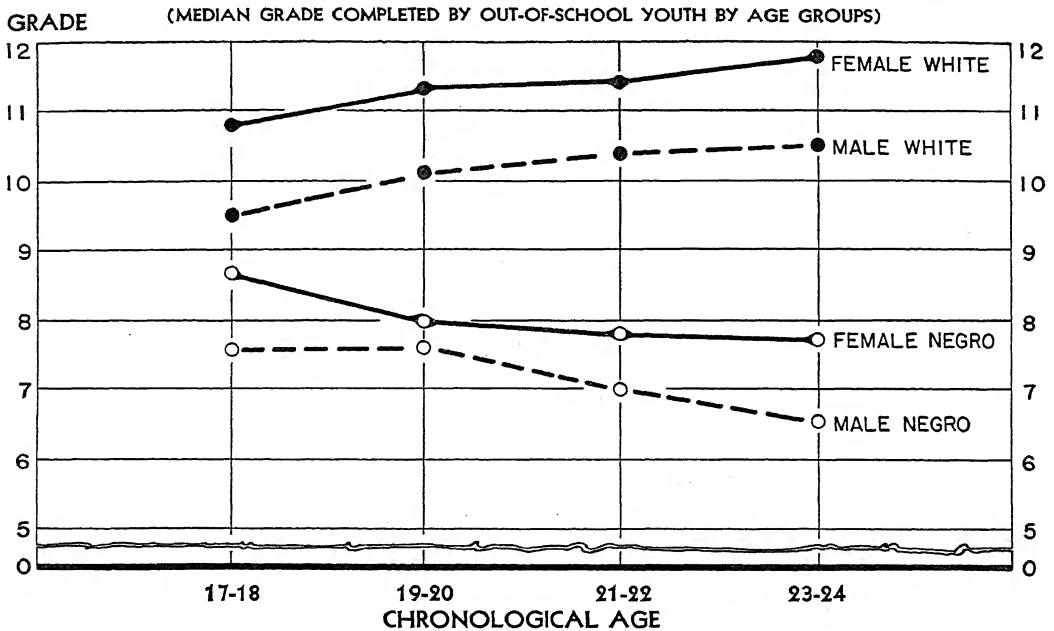
Median Grades Completed by Youth in Various Groups

In the foregoing analysis of our educational data, we have considered the matter of educational progress from the standpoint of the *proportions* of youth in certain groups who had attained various grade levels. Our final approach to this problem will be from the standpoint of the *median grade completed* by these same groups of youth.

Sex, race, and age. Figure 7 indicates the extent to which the education of the girls has exceeded that of the boys.

FIGURE 7

SEX AND RACE AS FACTORS IN SCHOOL GRADE ATTAINMENT



In order that no error or confusion would result from considering a group that included both races, the whites and Negroes of both sexes have been analyzed separately. It will be seen that there are four distinct levels of schooling represented by the following groups:

- Highest level: white female youth
- Second level: white male youth
- Third level: Negro female youth
- Fourth level: Negro male youth

At every age level and for each *race*, there is a difference in favor of the *female* youth.

At every age level and for each *sex*, there is a difference in favor of the *white* youth.

Although the difference in the median grade attained by the boys and girls (9.4 for the boys and 11 for the girls) is a significant one, the difference as between the races is considerably greater (10.8 for the white youth and 7.5 for the Negro). All this means is that the sex differences within the races are substantially less than the race differences within the sexes—a fact that clearly indicates that race is a decidedly more potent factor in determining grade attainment than is sex.

In considering the potency of race as a factor in determining the extent to which youth progress in school, one is impelled to point to the danger of assuming that this factor is primarily biological in character. There is every reason to suspect that these differences in the school grades attained by white and Negro youth reflect environmental as well as biological variations. It is unquestionable that they are due, in a large measure, to influences which are quite unrelated to any inherent biologic or racial differences.

Usual occupation of father. Much has been said in the preceding pages about the profound effect that the occupation of the youth's father usually has upon his general social, economic, and educational status. In going through the data uncovered in all our areas of information, this reality, like a gloomy chorus in a Greek tragedy, has been an ever recurring theme.

With a little professional license, one might consider the factors that influence grade attainment as a miniature deck of cards. However this deck is shuffled, one card—one fact—will always be on top: the strongest single factor in determining how far a youth goes in school is the occupation of his father.

When the father's occupation is held constant, the differences between the grades attained by white and Negro youth are small compared with the differences in the grades attained by the youth with fathers in the various occupational groups. Moreover, the *range* between the median grades attained by youth of professional and farm laborer fathers is very much the same for all the groups considered—a difference of about five grades. Clearly it is not primarily sex, race, nor place of residence, but rather the occupation of the father that accounts for these differences.

Summary of Factors Affecting the Amount of Schooling Youth Receive

In what appears to be the order of their importance, the outstanding factors that affect the amount of schooling youth receive are enumerated below:

The occupation of the father. The largest variations in the schooling youth had received were found to be associated with the father's usual occupation. This held true for the Negro as well as the white youth, as well as for each sex group within the races.

Race is placed second and above sex. An accurate evaluation of the importance of the race factor is complicated because Negro youth, especially in the rural areas,

have fathers whose usual occupation is either farm laborer, farm tenant, or unskilled laborer. Thus it is impossible to determine exactly how much of the relatively low grade attainment of Negro youth is due to some "race difference" and how much is the result of the fact that a large proportion of Negroes are in economically weak occupations.

Sex. Sex differences appear regardless of how the data are analyzed. Within the races, within occupations, within the different age groups, and within the various localities, the female youth in general have higher median grades.

WHY DO YOUTH LEAVE SCHOOL?

So far, we have been concerned chiefly with an analysis of the factors that seem to influence the youth's school progress as measured by the grade he has attained. Our purpose has been to discover these factors, and to attempt to measure their relative potency. At this point, we consider briefly the factors operating to terminate a youth's formal education, as revealed by the reasons for leaving school that were given by the youth themselves.

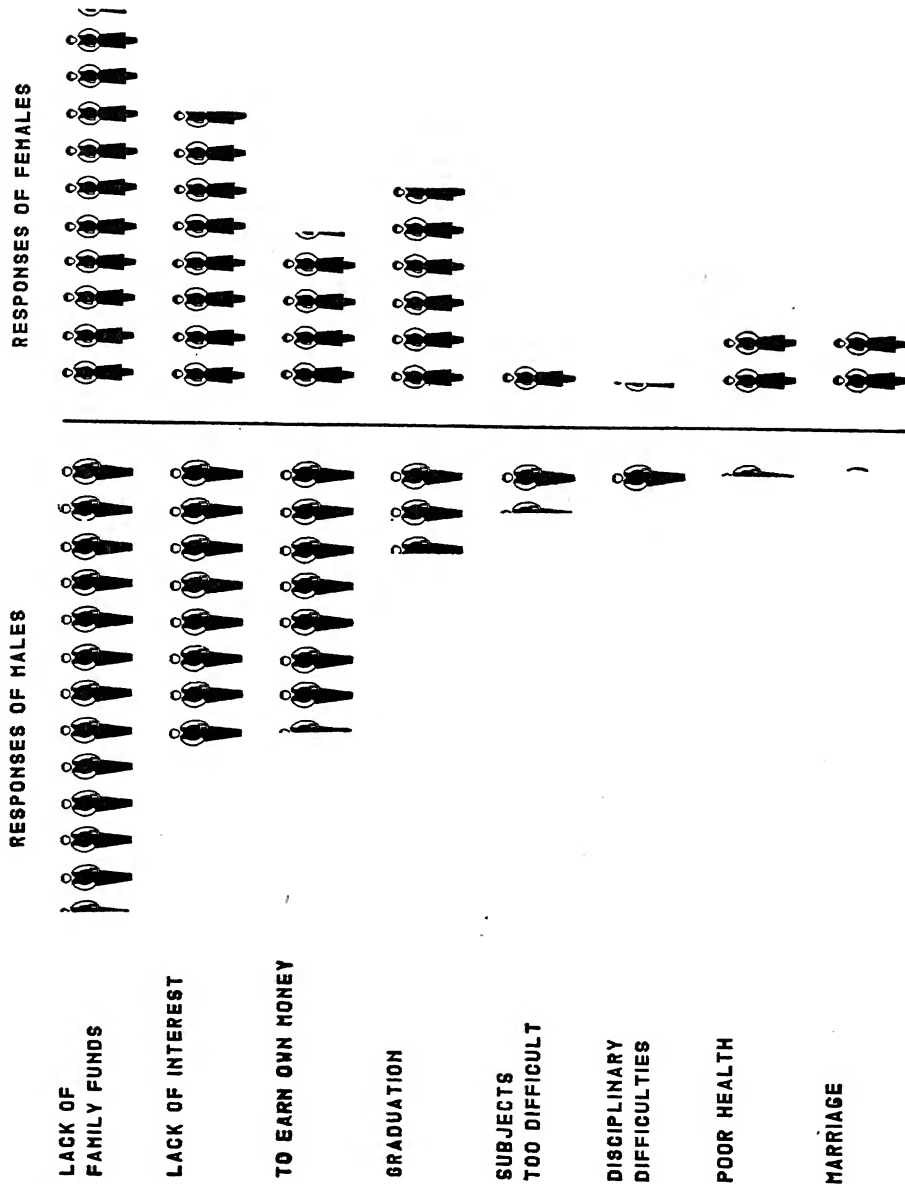
Youth's Reasons for Leaving School

The following table presents an analysis of the reasons given by young people for leaving school.

TABLE 18—REASONS GIVEN BY YOUTH
FOR LEAVING SCHOOL

Reason given	Percentage of youth
Economic reasons:.....	54.0
Lack of family funds.....	34.1
Desire to earn own money.....	15.7
Needed to work at home.....	4.2
Lack of interest in school:.....	24.6
Lack of interest.....	20.6
Disciplinary trouble.....	2.2
Subjects too difficult.....	1.8
Feeling of completion upon graduation.....	13.2
Poor health.....	3.2
To marry.....	3.0
Other reasons.....	2.0
Total.....	100.0
Number of youth.....	10,858

WHY DO YOUTH LEAVE SCHOOL ?



EACH FIGURE REPRESENTS THE REASONS GIVEN BY 3% OF EACH SEX GROUP

The responses analyzed in Table 18 indicate that, for every *twenty-five* youth who have left school,

Ten left because of economic need,

Six left because of lack of interest or because of maladjustment,

Four left because they wanted to earn their own money,

Three left because they considered their education completed upon graduation,

Two left for other reasons such as marriage, health, etc.

The outstanding reason given by the youth for leaving school was the financial inability of their parents to keep them there. In fact, almost four out of every ten (38 per cent) of the out-of-school youth indicated that they would have preferred to remain in school, but that lack of family funds, or the need for their services at home, prevented their continuing.

It is also significant that a fourth of the youth said they left school because of a lack of interest or because of their inability to adjust themselves to the school program. This 25 per cent is probably an understatement, as undoubtedly a large proportion of those who said they dropped out because they wanted to earn money for themselves did so because the attraction of economic independence was greater than that of the school program.

The fact that 13.2 per cent said they had left school because they considered their education complete upon graduation does not mean, of course, that only 13.2 per cent actually completed the grades in the various school levels. All it means is that this proportion left school at the completion of the elementary, secondary, or college level because they felt that the education they had received was adequate to meet their needs.

Does "Equality of Educational Opportunities" Exist?

In so far as the matter of leaving school at undesirably low levels is the direct result of inadequate funds, it is obvious that the remedy lies deeper than any improvement or extension of the educational programs. If society is interested in broadening and deepening the educational backgrounds of *all* its young people, it seems quite clear that the first move is to make further schooling possible for them by some local, state, or federal subsidizing program, a beginning of which has already been made by the National Youth Administration.

As indicated above, about 40 per cent of our youth would go farther in school if the opportunity were provided them. An analysis of the responses of the twelfth-grade graduates suggests that almost half (46.8 per cent) failed to proceed to a higher educational level because of a lack of family funds. Almost as large a proportion (42.7 per cent) of the youth employed on relief projects gave the same reason.

It seems obvious that before the schools can effectively participate in any solution of the national youth problem opportunities for attending them must be provided. In other words, it would seem that society's first job is to change the nature of "equality of educational opportunity" from that of a noble jingle to an established and effective reality.

Are Schools Adapted to the Needs and Interests of Youth?

Four out of every ten youth assert that they leave school because their parents cannot continue to send them. For them, the solution is primarily a matter of providing opportunities that don't exist. For a large proportion of the remainder, the solution is more definitely a matter of so adjusting our school programs as to make them sufficiently attractive to compete with other things. Our data reveal that, with several groups of youth, unsatisfactory school adjustment—by which is meant a combination of lack of interest, disciplinary difficulties, and too difficult subjects—is a more general reason for leaving school than a lack of family funds. So far as the youth's own statements of why he left school can be accepted as the real reasons, all of this indicates that, for large groups of youth, the schools simply have failed to function as a genuine force. The fact that relatively high percentages of youth giving lack of interest as their reason for dropping out were found among those who left school at the upper high school level, as well as among those who left at the elementary level, indicates that all along the line the schools, as they are now set up, are adapted to neither the needs nor the interests of large numbers of our young people.

For youth who are preparing for professional vocations, it appears that the holding power of the schools is exceedingly strong. Less than 5 per cent of young people found to be engaged in professional work stated that they left school because they lacked interest. Somewhat the same situation is true for youth discovered in office and sales work, as only 14 per cent of the youth so engaged gave lack of interest as their reason for dropping out.

Three hundred and forty-two (about 3 per cent) of the out-of-school youth gave marriage as their reason for leaving. Of this number, a substantial proportion dropped out of school at relatively low levels. In fact, over half the married boys (52.4 per cent) and almost half the married girls (42.3 per cent) were found to have received no more than an elementary school education. This naturally raises the question as to what schools are doing to help these youth meet the obligations and problems which marriage is certain to force upon them. If there is an economic justification for providing vocational training for youth who will have to earn their own living at a comparatively early age, there would seem to be an equally sound social justification in providing young people with at least a basic knowledge of the obligations and problems of marriage. That youth themselves consider this a part of the school's job is

indicated by their opinion that sex education should be made a regular part of the school program.

What to Do about It

An analysis of the reasons given by youth as to why they left school tends, in a general way, to support the conclusions that grew out of our analysis of the data on the school progress they had made. The first move should be one of providing adequate educational opportunities for all the youth who are capable and who are desirous of taking advantage of them.

The second step in increasing the extent to which the schools can effectively participate in the solution of the youth problem concerns those youth who, though provided by their parents with adequate opportunity, chose to leave school at relatively low levels. For these, the approach is clearly one of adapting school programs to their interests and needs. Youngsters, like horses, can be led to water, but only thirst will make them drink.

OUT-OF-SCHOOL YOUTH IN PART-TIME SCHOOLS

Only one out of every eleven of the more than 10,000 out-of-school youth interviewed was found to have received any part-time education during the current school

TABLE 19—EXTENT OF PART-TIME EDUCATION TAKEN BY YOUTH PERMANENTLY OUT OF SCHOOL AND THEIR REASONS FOR TAKING IT

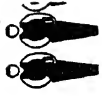
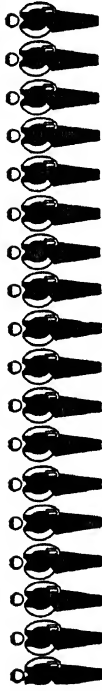
Classification of youth	Percentage of youth in each group			
	No part-time education taken	Part-time education taken for following reason		
		Vocational	Cultural	Other
Farm.....	96.8	2.2	0.6	0.4
Village.....	91.3	6.4	0.9	1.4
Town.....	87.1	9.5	1.7	1.7
City.....	89.3	8.0	1.9	0.8
Employed.....	88.5	8.1	1.5	1.9
Unemployed.....	91.1	6.1	1.3	1.5
Homemakers.....	97.4	1.0	0.7	0.9
Father's occupation:				
Professional-technical.....	81.8	14.8	2.7	0.7
Office-sales.....	85.0	11.5	1.5	2.0
Managerial.....	86.2	9.8	1.9	2.1
Skilled.....	90.0	7.7	1.7	0.6
Semi-skilled.....	93.4	4.8	0.8	1.0
Domestic-personal.....	93.8	4.5	1.7	—
Unskilled.....	94.8	3.4	1.5	0.3
Farm owner-tenant.....	96.0	3.0	0.5	0.5
Farm laborer.....	98.0	0.4	1.4	0.2

ARE OUT-OF-SCHOOL YOUTH RECEIVING PART-TIME EDUCATION ?

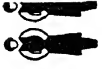
YOUTH NOT RECEIVING

YOUTH RECEIVING

WHITE MALE



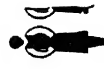
WHITE FEMALE



NEGRO MALE



NEGRO FEMALE



EACH FIGURE REPRESENTS 5% OF EACH RACE-SEX GROUP

term (or preceding term, if interviewed during vacation). Most of the courses taken were for vocational rather than cultural purposes. Generally speaking, the less schooling a youth had received in a full-time day school, the less he had taken from a part-time school. Almost three times as large a proportion of those who had reached the high school level were found to be taking some part-time course as was found in the group who had gone no farther than the eighth grade.

The extent to which the youth of certain groups were receiving part-time education is summarized in Table 19. A glance at the percentages reveals some trends that are strikingly similar to those discovered in the median grades attained by youth of various groups.

Locality of residence. As the population density of the area increases, the degree of participation in part-time school activities increases. This doubtless reflects the dearth of part-time schools in sparsely settled areas.

Employment status. A larger proportion of *employed* youth are participating in part-time school activities than unemployed.

Father's occupation. As the occupation of the father descends from the professional to the unskilled and farm laborer levels, the extent to which his children take part-time school courses decreases accordingly. The two extremes for vocational education are 14.8 and 0.4 per cent.

Do Out-of-School Youth Want Vocational Training?

This question was asked only of youth who had left school. They were asked if they would take vocational training if it were made available. As used by the interviewer, the term "vocational training" meant training for any job. It included training in the professions and arts, as well as in business and trades. For the majority (60 per cent) the answer was "yes."

As suggested in one of our introductory paragraphs, the questions asked of our young people were generally such as to exclude any temptation to make false or inaccurate responses. In this particular question, however, there is clearly an encouragement of wishful thinking. That six out of every ten of the out-of-school youth are, in fact, genuinely desirous of further vocational training is, we suspect, open to question. We doubt, therefore, if this 60 per cent can be taken as an indication of the potential demand by out-of-school youth for free public vocational training.

It is believed, however, that these data reveal that there is a real demand for more vocational training. Many young people have learned, especially during the past few years, what usually happens when, to a prospective employer's question "What can you do?" they answer "Anything." What usually happens is that they get no job. These and similar experiences have led them to believe that training for a specific type of work is very often not only desirable but necessary.

Type of Vocational Training Desired

An element of wishful thinking is also apparent in many of the responses to the second half of the question: If so, for what kind of job would you like to be trained?

TABLE 20—TYPES OF VOCATIONAL TRAINING DESIRED BY OUT-OF-SCHOOL YOUTH

Classification of youth	Professional	Business and secretarial	Trades and crafts	Domestic or personal	Agriculture and related fields	Other types; uncertain
All out-of-school youth.....	36.4	24.8	23.5	8.2	1.7	5.4
16-year-olds.....	22.0	27.0	30.2	11.0	2.0	7.8
18-year-olds.....	33.3	28.9	23.6	8.3	0.9	5.0
20-year-olds.....	38.3	25.1	21.8	8.3	1.5	5.0
22-year-olds.....	41.4	24.1	20.7	7.7	1.8	4.3
24-year-olds.....	42.4	21.8	20.7	7.7	3.0	4.4
Farm.....	25.4	19.6	26.8	9.5	7.5	11.2
Village.....	36.1	26.7	22.6	8.1	0.7	5.8
Town.....	41.9	28.1	15.7	6.8	0.9	6.6
City.....	39.2	25.0	24.7	8.1	0.3	2.7
Employed.....	36.2	23.4	26.4	5.5	2.6	5.9
Unemployed.....	34.3	26.3	24.8	8.8	0.6	5.2
Homemakers.....	38.5	28.9	6.9	21.6	0.3	3.8
Youth's occupation:						
Professional-technical.....	82.8	11.3	2.9	1.1	0.4	1.5
Managerial.....	40.8	24.6	16.2	—	9.9	8.5
Office-sales.....	38.3	39.2	13.5	3.2	0.8	5.0
Skilled.....	38.2	12.7	44.0	0.6	—	4.5
Semi-skilled.....	35.6	19.7	33.3	5.3	0.6	5.5
Unskilled.....	19.3	9.3	49.6	2.5	8.0	11.3
Domestic-personal.....	34.3	27.1	10.8	23.2	1.0	3.6
Relief projects.....	23.1	18.7	46.2	7.7	1.4	2.9
Father's occupation:						
Professional-technical.....	63.0	18.9	9.4	4.0	1.7	3.0
Office-sales.....	47.2	31.8	13.0	4.8	0.4	2.8
Skilled.....	33.8	27.5	26.7	7.4	0.8	3.8
Farm owner-tenant.....	27.7	22.3	22.0	8.5	7.3	12.2
Unskilled.....	27.0	20.8	34.4	13.3	1.0	3.5

An examination of Table 20 will reveal that out of every *twenty-five* youth expressing a desire for vocational training,

Nine desired training for one of the professions,

Six desired training for business or commercial work,

Six desired training in trades and crafts,

Two desired training in domestic and personal service, and

Two desired training in other unclassified fields.

About all that some of these data show is that vocations, like the grass that grows in pastures, usually look greener on the other side of the fence. This is somewhat dramatically illustrated by the responses of farm youth. About one out of fourteen wanted training in agriculture.

Yet, even when due weight is given to human nature's ancient enthusiasm for variety and change, there still remain in these expressed preferences for vocational courses some implications that are worthy of sober consideration.

More than five out of every six out-of-school youth who wanted training wanted it in one of the professions, in business, or in the skilled trades. For the out-of-school group as a whole, 36 per cent wanted training in the professions. It will be remembered that the median grade attainment of this group was the completion of the ninth grade.

These two facts—the outstanding preference for professional training, and the generally low grade attained—can, and probably do, mean two things. They mean that this younger generation aspires in the traditional manner of all younger generations. It wants to do bigger and better things. They also mean that, for some reason or other, there has been precious little realism injected into the thinking of a large proportion of our young people about the jobs that are available and the services they are qualified to perform. In view of the almost complete absence of vocational guidance from their school experiences, at least a part of the responsibility for this dearth of realism can justly be laid at the doorstep of the schools.

Among the hopeful and constructive facts that the data in Table 20 reveal is the very real demand for training in trades and crafts. In spite of the denials from certain labor leaders, there is a considerable body of evidence to suggest that, if there *is* such a thing as an unfilled labor demand, it exists in certain kinds of skilled trades. The fact that half of the 1,000 youth who were found to be employed on unskilled jobs desired some kind of vocational training, and that half this number (49.6 per cent) wanted training in some trade or craft, is not only a refreshing item of realism, but a definitely hopeful sign.

YOUTH EVALUATE THEIR SCHOOL EXPERIENCES

VOCATIONAL GUIDANCE—FACT OR MYTH?

As used by the interviewer, the term “vocational guidance” was understood to mean vocational advice given by someone reasonably well acquainted with the various occupational fields. This person might be a school counselor, teacher, principal, official in a public or private employment agency, or any other qualified person, exclusive of the youth’s family or his close relatives. As used, the term further presupposed that the person giving the advice had made a reasonably careful study of the youth’s aptitudes, limitations, and interests, and that he had given his advice accordingly.

Youth Who Have Received Vocational Guidance

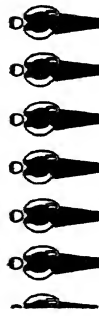
About the only encouraging implication of the data presented in Table 21 is that a larger proportion of youth now in school reported that they had received vocational guidance than was the case with those who had permanently left.

TO WHAT EXTENT DO YOUTH RECEIVE VOCATIONAL GUIDANCE FROM SCHOOLS ?

HAD RECEIVED GUIDANCE

HAD RECEIVED NO GUIDANCE

STUDENTS



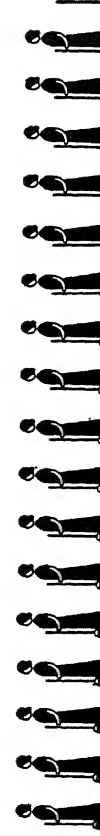
UNEMPLOYED



EMPLOYED



HOMEMAKERS



EACH COMPLETE FIGURE REPRESENTS 5% OF THE YOUTH IN EACH GROUP

TABLE 21—EXTENT TO WHICH YOUTH HAVE RECEIVED VOCATIONAL GUIDANCE

Classification of youth	Percentage who received	
	Guidance	No guidance
All youth.....	22.7	77.3
Students.....	34.3	65.7
Nonstudents.....	19.9	80.1
Farm.....	12.7	87.3
Village.....	16.4	83.6
Town.....	17.5	82.5
City.....	31.8	68.2
Male: white.....	23.7	76.3
Male: Negro.....	17.6	82.4
Female: white.....	22.9	77.1
Female: Negro.....	21.1	78.9
16-year-olds.....	27.9	72.1
18-year-olds.....	24.5	75.5
20-year-olds.....	22.6	77.4
22-year-olds.....	20.4	79.6
24-year-olds.....	16.9	83.1
Youth's occupation:		
Professional-technical.....	33.3	66.7
Managerial.....	22.6	77.4
Office-sales.....	25.4	74.6
Skilled.....	22.8	77.2
Semi-skilled.....	20.1	79.9
Domestic-personal.....	16.1	83.9
Unskilled.....	10.8	89.2
Father's occupation:		
Professional-technical.....	32.5	67.5
Office-sales.....	27.6	72.4
Skilled.....	26.2	73.8
Farm owner-tenant.....	13.5	86.5
Unskilled.....	17.8	82.2

An examination of the first column of Table 21 will give one an idea of the extent to which youth in various groups have received vocational guidance. Some of the factors that seem to exert an influence over whether or not a youth receives this important service are set down below:

School status. It will be seen that almost twice as large a proportion of youth now in school stated they had received guidance as those who had left school (34.3 per cent as against 19.9 per cent)

Area. It will also be seen that the amount of guidance youth receive, like the median grades they attain, is closely associated with the population density of the areas in which they live—the least for youth living on farms, and the most for youth living in cities.

Race. One finds almost equal proportions of white and Negro youth who have received vocational guidance.

Age. One next finds an inverse relationship between guidance received and the age of the youth. Starting with the 24-year-old group (with 16.9 per cent), there is a progressive increase for all ages, reaching a maximum of 27.9 per cent for the youth who were 16 years old.

Youth's occupation. While one out of every three youth found to be engaged in professional work had been given vocational advice, less than one out of every nine working as unskilled laborers had received such service.

Father's occupation. One sees again the apparently inevitable relationship between the services youth receive and the occupation of their fathers. Almost twice as many youth whose fathers were in the professions had received guidance as was found to be the case with the youth whose fathers were unskilled laborers.

As a finally significant fact, the following condensed table reveals that, of the youth who had left school, more than two-thirds of the high school graduates, and almost two-thirds of those who had obtained some college education, had *never* received any vocational guidance from *any* source.

TABLE 22—PROPORTIONS OF YOUTH IN SPECIFIED GRADE LEVELS WHO HAD RECEIVED VOCATIONAL GUIDANCE

Grade completed	Received vocational guidance
7th grade.....	1 out of 10
9th grade.....	2 out of 10
12th grade graduate.....	3 out of 10
4 or more years beyond high school.....	4 out of 10

Sources of Vocational Guidance

Although our primary purpose in asking this question was to discover the extent to which youth had received vocational guidance, we also wanted, if possible, to arrive at some conclusion as to how this need was being met by schools, employment agencies, and other sources.

In so far as the youth of our sample were getting any vocational advice at all, it may quite definitely be stated that they were getting it from the schools. In fact, more than 90 per cent (93.3) of the vocational advice was given by these institutions. Only one youth in a hundred was found to have received vocational guidance from officials in public and private employment agencies.

Youth's Evaluation of Vocational Guidance Received

An effort was also made to get the youth's own evaluation of whatever guidance he may have received. In view of the fact that practically all guidance was provided by the schools, these evaluations will necessarily refer to the school guidance programs. The first column of Table 23 shows the percentages of youth in various groups who considered that the vocational counseling they had received had been, or would be, of real value to them in determining a job for which they were fitted.

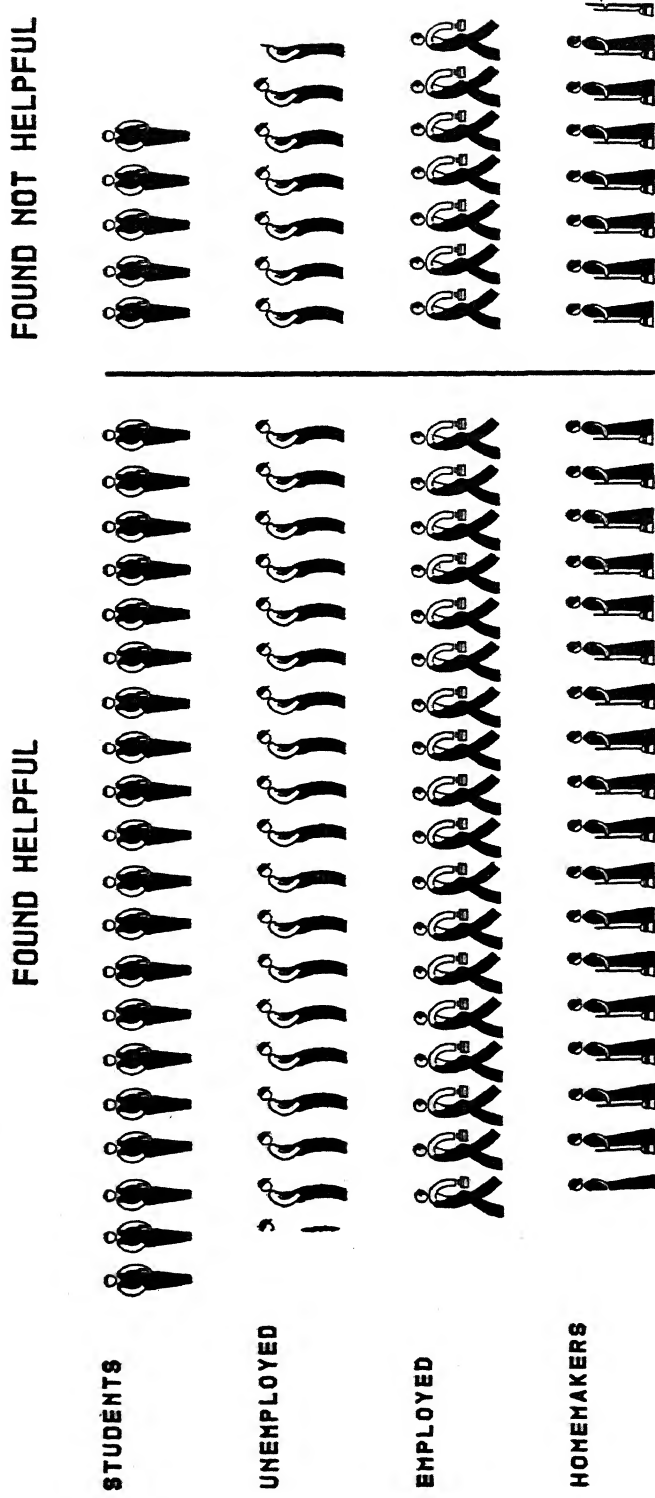
TABLE 23—SOURCE AND YOUTH'S EVALUATION OF VOCATIONAL GUIDANCE RECEIVED*

Classification of youth	School		All other sources
	Helpful	Not helpful	
All youth.....	69.0	24.2	6.8
Students.....	75.3	18.8	5.9
Nonstudents.....	66.6	26.4	7.0
Employed.....	65.7	26.0	8.3
Unemployed.....	69.0	26.0	5.0
Farm.....	77.9	15.3	6.8
Village.....	77.1	16.0	6.9
Town.....	72.2	19.5	8.3
City.....	64.9	28.8	6.3
Male: white.....	69.8	22.0	8.2
Male: Negro.....	72.0	22.6	5.4
Female: white.....	68.1	26.3	5.6
Female: Negro.....	68.4	27.7	3.9
16-year-olds.....	76.6	19.6	3.8
18-year-olds.....	69.6	25.3	5.1
20-year-olds.....	67.8	27.9	4.3
22-year-olds.....	63.3	25.6	11.1
24-year-olds.....	67.7	22.9	9.4
Father's occupation:			
Professional-technical.....	71.6	20.2	8.2
Office-sales.....	68.9	25.6	5.5
Skilled.....	67.5	25.9	6.6
Farm owner-tenant.....	77.4	16.5	6.1
Unskilled.....	65.5	28.3	6.2

* This table covers only the 22.7 per cent who had received guidance.

Of the out-of-school youth who had received guidance from the *schools*, over 70 per cent (71.4) reported that they had found it helpful. It would seem to require an unusually critical mind to find anything very unfortunate in this record. In so far as youth themselves are capable of passing intelligent and unbiased judgments on the

HOW YOUTH EVALUATE THE VOCATIONAL GUIDANCE THEY ARE RECEIVING OR HAVE RECEIVED FROM THEIR SCHOOLS *



* ONLY 2762 OR 20% HAD RECEIVED GUIDANCE FROM SCHOOLS

EACH FIGURE REPRESENTS 4% OF THE YOUTH OF EACH GROUP WHO HAD RECEIVED GUIDANCE FROM THE SCHOOLS

services they receive, this indicates that, *so far as it functions*, the vocational counseling service of the schools has been better than 70 per cent efficient.

The unfortunate thing, of course, is that for the great majority of young people the schools simply haven't functioned at all, so far as this very important service is concerned. When all the youth including those now in school are considered, one still finds that only sixteen out of every hundred have received what they consider helpful vocational guidance from their schools.

Relation of Guidance to Youth's Evaluation of Their Schooling

Later on we will discuss briefly youth's estimate of both the cultural and economic value of their school experiences. Table 24 suggests the extent to which their receiving, or not receiving, vocational guidance may have affected their estimates of the economic value of the schooling they have had.

TABLE 24—RELATION BETWEEN VOCATIONAL GUIDANCE RECEIVED
AND YOUTH'S APPRAISAL OF THE ECONOMIC VALUE
OF THEIR SCHOOLING

Economic value of school	Employed youth		Unemployed youth	
	No guidance	Helpful school guidance	No guidance	Helpful school guidance
No help.....	12.1	5.3	16.0	6.0
Little help.....	19.7	9.1	21.4	15.2
Fair amount of help....	22.3	14.2	20.5	16.3
Considerable help.....	20.0	26.1	20.4	26.3
Great help.....	25.9	45.3	21.7	36.2

This table reveals two interesting facts: For both the employed and the unemployed groups, the proportion of youth who asserted that schooling had been of great economic value to them was substantially higher among those who had received helpful guidance from the schools than it was among those who had received no guidance at all. Over 45 per cent (45.3) of the employed youth who had had the benefit of helpful vocational counseling felt that their school experience had, in general, been of great economic value. For the employed youth who had received no guidance, the percentage who felt the same way was only 26. The difference is significant.

Here are a few responses that indicate what young people say when they think about vocational guidance:

"Principal of high school was very helpful to me."

"It got me my job."

"The greatest problem is finding a career that suits."

"That's a weakness in all schools."

"Young people are wondering what they are going to do when they get older."

"I just advised myself."

"I done all my own planning."

"I wish I had had some help."

"I'd have been better off if somebody had helped me."

"Teachers influenced me very little."

"Most everyone can get enough education. The real trouble is finding out what to do with it."

"They [in high school] had vocational guidance teachers, but we never paid any attention to them."

"They led me wrong."

"They don't know their stuff. People get misguided by them."

"Vocational teachers call the girls in about three times a year, but it doesn't help much."

"I had my palm read."

Whose Responsibility?

No one who is close to the realities of this situation will have the notion that the schools can be expected to provide vocational guidance to all the youth who have been exposed to their influence. When it is remembered that half the youth between the ages of 16 and 24 drop out of school at various levels between the early elementary grades and the completion of the ninth grade, at least one of the reasons for the scarcity of vocational counseling becomes obvious. We know, in fact, that as youth go farther in school the probability that they will receive guidance increases accordingly. In terms of exact percentages our data indicate that, while only 4 per cent of the youth who had left school before the completion of the sixth grade stated they had received vocational guidance, 38.7 per cent of the college graduates made the same report. Thus, even when just allowance is made for early drop-outs, the fact still stands that two out of every three youth finishing high school, and almost the same proportion finishing college, had never enjoyed the benefit of what, to them, might have been a most valuable service.

If this vital need of providing adequate vocational guidance is to be met, the first step is obviously one of increasing and improving the service to the youth who are still in school. The proportion of high school graduates who had received no vocational guidance indicates that even when the schools have adequate time and opportunity they do little about providing this kind of service. The next step should consist either in expanding the sphere of the school's influence, in order to reach the large numbers who drop out at early levels, or in creating some new agency to meet the problem.

Further along in the course of the interview, each young person was asked: "Regardless of available opportunities, what kind of work would you most like to

do?" The large majority thought they knew. How they came to their decisions, and how much cold realism had entered into the thinking that produced them, we are in no position to know. All we do know is that about four out of every five had to decide without the benefit of the schools or other agencies.

At a later time, we will also discuss the relationship between the jobs which employed youth preferred and the work they were actually found to be doing. The reality of vocational maladjustment stands out like a bump.

Probably as good a remedy for this situation as has so far been suggested is a comprehensive and effective vocational guidance program. Effective vocational guidance involves a "case work approach," and is based upon three fundamentals: a sound understanding of the aptitudes and limitations of the individual, a general acquaintance with the technical requirements of specific jobs, and a realistic knowledge of available employment opportunities.

So far as young people are concerned, what is clearly needed are techniques and procedures that can uncover not only the aptitudes but also the potentialities of the individual. What is also needed is a reliable method of determining actual labor demands, such as an adequate employment-unemployment census. Before we can presume to guide our young people, it would be well to know what there is for them to be guided into.

In the provision of this much needed service the schools, through a vigorous and intelligent administration of vocational clinics, can play a considerably more important part than they have played so far. Once the schools, within their limited sphere of influence, have done all that can reasonably be expected of them, perhaps society, more keenly conscious of its responsibility to its youth, will provide appropriate agencies to assume what remains of the job. The agency probably best equipped to serve the large majority of youth who are out of school is a more thoroughly developed junior employment division of the public employment service.

DOES EDUCATION PAY?

The difficulty of adapting our education programs to the needs and interests of modern youth is aggravated, not so much by a dearth, as by a diversity, of qualified opinions on what should be done. We have no impulse to assume that one of these sources is more authoritative or reliable than another. The truth, if there is any, lies buried in various places, and one of these places, we suspect, is in the opinions and suggestions of the youth themselves.

In bringing about the long delayed and vitally needed adjustment of school programs to the realities of modern social and economic life, responsible people will find much that is valuable in the reactions and the evaluations of the youth them-

selves. There is hardly any danger that the evaluations of young people will be taken too seriously. There is a far greater danger that they will be ignored.

A number of our questions were designed to elicit the opinions youth have about certain subjects to which they could reasonably be expected to have given some thought. One of these was worded as follows: "Do you feel that your education helped or will help you to earn a living?"

As source material upon which to base our conclusions as to the opinions young people have on certain issues, we have what might be defined as both quantitative and qualitative data. In other words, we have both the statistical analysis of the youth's answers, and cards on which are recorded some 15,000 verbatim responses. In our effort to present the picture of how youth have reacted to the education they have received, we shall draw from both these sources of information.

It will be clear, from an acquaintance with the procedure observed in presenting other data, that it is not enough to analyze findings with respect to the *total* group and stop at that. It is usual that only in the disclosure of differences between facts or opinions, as they are related to important *groups*, can the real meaning and implications of data be revealed.

What Youth Think about the Economic Value of Their Schooling

Table 25 brings together significant data on this question as related to specific groups. For those who may prefer not to risk losing themselves in the "whelming brine" of such an array of percentages, the outstanding implications are listed below:

Students-nonstudents. Three out of every ten youth (30.7 per cent) who had permanently left school were found to have the feeling that the schooling they had received had been or would be of little or no economic value to them—but less than one out of ten (7.9 per cent) of the youth in school felt that the education they were receiving would, in the future, be of little or no value. This seems to indicate that for a substantial proportion of young people education fails in later years to fulfill its original promise.

All youth. Stated in other terms, these data disclose that, for every *thirty* young people, both in and out of school,

Three consider their education of no economic value,
Five consider their education of little economic value,
Six consider their education of some economic value,
Six consider their education of considerable economic value, while
Ten consider their education of great economic value.

In short, twice as many young people made the two highest appraisals as made the two lowest.

TABLE 25—YOUTH'S APPRAISAL OF THE ECONOMIC VALUE OF THEIR SCHOOLING

Classification of youth	Percentage of youth in each group					
	Amount of help					No opinion
	No help	Little	Some	Considerable	Great	
All youth.....	10.4	16.0	18.6	21.7	32.0	1.3
Male.....	10.8	17.6	20.2	21.9	28.7	0.8
Female.....	10.0	14.2	16.9	21.9	35.8	1.2
White.....	10.6	13.5	17.8	22.1	35.1	0.9
Negro.....	9.3	29.9	23.3	20.1	15.8	1.6
16-year-olds.....	7.0	13.4	14.8	23.2	39.6	2.0
18-year-olds.....	9.6	15.4	18.9	24.0	31.4	0.7
20-year-olds.....	11.5	16.3	18.8	21.7	30.8	0.9
22-year-olds.....	12.7	18.1	18.6	19.5	30.8	0.3
24-year-olds.....	12.3	17.7	21.1	18.3	30.1	0.5
Employed.....	10.9	17.8	20.6	21.0	28.8	0.9
Unemployed.....	14.4	19.7	19.3	21.3	23.7	1.6
Students.....	2.3	5.6	10.4	25.1	55.2	1.4
Nonstudents.....	12.3	18.4	20.6	20.9	26.5	1.3

Age. The older and more experienced the group, the less favorable their judgments. For example, the proportion of 24-year-olds who consider their schooling of little or no economic value was one and a half times the proportion of 16-year-olds.

Race. The white youth were more favorable in their appraisals than were the Negro youth. More than twice as large a proportion of whites considered their education as having great economic value than was the case for the Negroes. The percentages are 35.1 for white and 15.8 for Negro youth.

Locality of residence. Farm youth were less generous in their appraisals than city youth, and young people from the relief families of both races were more critical than the youth from families who had not been on relief during the year preceding the interview. Nearly four out of every ten from white relief families and more than eight of every ten from Negro relief families considered their schooling of little or no economic value.

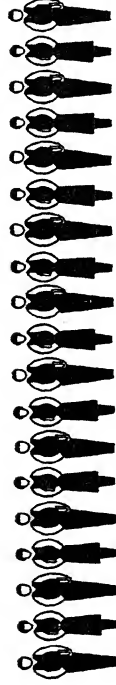
The table above sets forth the evaluations of *all* youth. It includes the responses of the young people who were in school as well as those who were out of

DOES EDUCATION PAY ?

WHITE

NEGRO

CONSIDERABLE
OR GREAT HELP



LITTLE OR
NO HELP



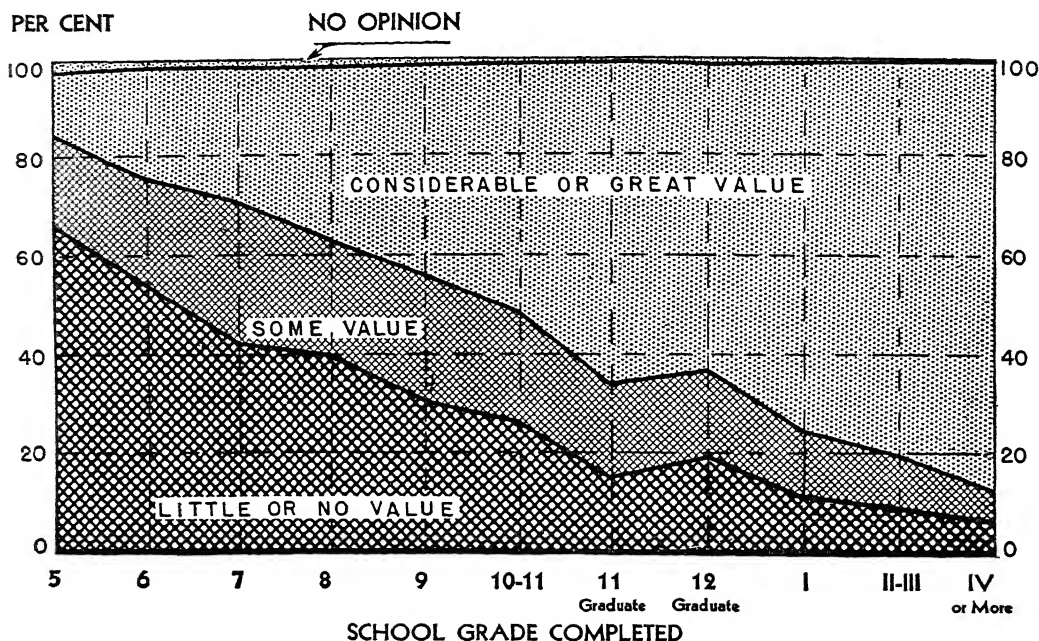
SOME HELP



EACH SYMBOL REPRESENTS THE EVALUATIONS OF 5 % OF EACH RACIAL GROUP

school at the time of the interview. Figure 8 deals only with the youth who are out of school—with those to whom school is no longer an everyday reality, but an experience that calls up memories that seem to be as varied as the youth themselves.

FIGURE 8
OUT-OF-SCHOOL YOUTH ESTIMATE THE ECONOMIC VALUE OF THEIR SCHOOLING



The outstanding implication of Figure 8 is a decidedly constructive one so far as the schools are concerned. Nearly nine out of every ten (88 per cent) young persons who had gone through college looked back upon their school years with the feeling that their education had been of considerable or great economic value, while only 36 per cent of those who had left school at the completion of the eighth grade recalled their schooling with a similar sense of value received. When one combines the "little" and "no" value groups, one sees that as the grade attainment of the youth increases these unfavorable appraisals decrease accordingly. It is significant that the proportion of out-of-school youth who regarded their schooling as of little or no economic value is higher in *all* of the four lowest grade groups than the proportion who estimated the economic value of their education as considerable or great.

It will be remembered that for the whole group a little more than half the young people felt that their education had been, or would be, of considerable or great

economic value. A few of the comments made by young people who were so classified are listed below:

"You have to have at least a high school education to get along."

"If you haven't got a high school education, you can't get anything."

"If I hadn't a had the education that I did, I couldn't have even applied for the position."

"Without school you're no good. My mother and father had none, and I know what that has meant to them."

"You have a pretty tough time without an education. It seems nowadays the more education you have, the better chance you got."

"I wish I'd a went higher. You can't get a job lots of places without a high school education." (This from a young man, 20 years old, who had completed the sixth grade and two years at night school. He is now employed as a laborer in a steel mill.)

"If I hadn't taken up dressmaking, I wouldn't have gotten the job I have now." (This girl had had a two-year course in a vocational school. She is now employed in a dress factory.)

"All they ask is 'how much education do you have?'"

"I only wish I had more."

"Yes, indeed. Department stores won't take you unless you're a high school graduate."

"It trains your mind to think."

"Don't know what I'd do without it."

A little more than a fourth of the young people interviewed felt that their education had been of little or of no economic value to them. Here are a few of the things the youth in this group had to say:

"I wish I hadn't went. I hated school. I liked only shorthand and typing." (This 22-year-old girl is a high school graduate. Her only job so far has been that of an operator in a pants factory. She is now unemployed.)

"The trouble with high school education is that it gives you a bit of everything, but you can't get a job with it, better than a laborer."

"I'd give anything to have more education, because you can't get ahead without it. I'll probably be a maid all my life."

"Private schools for girls are a fizzle and a flop."

"They teach you the same thing over and over again in Catholic schools. For some years, I learned nothing new."

"It was the biggest waste of time in my life. They didn't teach anything useful to me."

"The jobs that I've had have been where you don't need to use your brains at all. You just work."

"I've always worked on farms, and that don't take no education."

DOES EDUCATION MAKE LIFE MORE WORTH LIVING?

There has been no inclination on our part to suggest that the primary function of the schools is to provide vocational education. Our purpose has rather been one of disclosing the fact that considerable numbers of young people feel quite strongly that at least one of the functions of our educational programs should be that of preparing them to earn a living.

The Cultural Value of Schooling

Once the interviewer had obtained the youth's appraisal of the economic value of his schooling, the next step was to get his evaluation of his education in terms of the contribution it had made to his capacity to "enjoy life more." Had his school experience made the business of living a richer and pleasanter thing?

The answer was quite generally "yes." Youth seem to take the cultural value of an education as a matter of course. A very common reaction to the inquiry was an expression of good-humored sympathy for people who ask obviously silly questions.

TABLE 26—YOUTH'S APPRAISAL OF THE CULTURAL VALUE OF THEIR SCHOOLING

Classification of youth	Percentage of youth in each group					
	Amount of help					No opinion
	No help	Little	Some	Considerable	Great	
All youth.....	3.8	8.0	15.5	25.1	46.5	1.1
Male: single.....	4.4	9.1	17.2	25.6	42.8	0.9
Male: married.....	6.4	13.2	21.0	26.0	32.8	0.6
Female: single.....	2.2	5.2	11.5	24.6	56.0	0.5
Female: married.....	4.4	9.1	16.5	25.3	43.7	1.0
White.....	3.4	6.3	14.0	25.0	50.6	0.7
Negro.....	6.2	17.6	24.1	26.2	24.8	1.1
Farm.....	3.1	11.7	23.6	27.9	33.7	—
Village.....	2.9	7.8	16.7	29.1	43.5	—
Town.....	2.9	7.0	10.9	24.1	55.1	—
City.....	5.0	6.9	12.6	22.7	52.8	^a
Students.....	1.1	2.5	8.7	26.0	60.6	1.1
Nonstudents.....	4.5	9.4	17.1	24.9	43.0	1.1
Employed.....	4.0	9.1	17.0	25.2	43.9	0.8
Unemployed.....	5.9	10.9	18.1	23.7	40.0	1.4
Homemakers.....	3.9	8.2	16.6	26.9	42.9	1.5
Father's occupation:						
Professional-technical.....	1.3	1.8	8.4	20.3	68.2	—
Office-sales.....	2.1	3.9	11.2	22.6	59.6	0.6
Farm owner-tenant.....	2.2	9.5	21.8	28.8	36.8	0.9
Unskilled.....	8.3	14.4	19.9	25.9	30.3	1.2

^a Less than 0.05 per cent.

A glance down the first column of Table 26 will suggest how rare an experience it is to find a young person who feels that his schooling has been of no cultural value. It is quite clear that the great majority feel that without their school experiences living would have been decidedly more meaningless and drab.

A few of the comments made by the great majority of youth who felt that their schooling had been of considerable or great value are listed below.

“If I hadn’t gone to school, I couldn’t ever read.” (A grateful tribute to a sixth grade “education.”)

“It develops somewhat of a personality.”

“My college education has been everything in my life.”

“My father picks up a paper and can’t read a word.”

“Immeasurably.”

“Wished I could have went to high school.”

“I got a little more polish and refinement in junior college than I got in high school. In other words, it taught me to be a lady.”

“If I didn’t get no learning, I couldn’t get along very good.”

“Without the education I have received, life wouldn’t be worth living.”

“I read a lot and know the poets and that sort of thing.”

“I’d be as dumb as an ox if I didn’t know how to read or write.” (Another grateful tribute to the elementary school.)

“My mother can’t read or write. I feel for those who can’t read or write.”

“All the help in the world.”

“If I hadn’t got a little literature in my hide, I’d have been satisfied to read western stories all my life.”

“It has given me what is known as a personality, which is helpful in meeting the public.”

And then, as a sort of brash interlude in this paeon of praise, you hear the mumbled grumbling of the few malcontents.

“It only made me feel disgusted with life. It has made me feel the inadequacy of the education I have had.” (With a ninth-grade education this 23-year-old youth apparently feels that a little learning is a useless thing.)

“In our school it’s strictly technical, nothing cultural—except a pool table.”

“It don’t do you no good.” (This blast from a 16-year-old girl who had to leave school at the age of 14 after completing the tenth grade. One of eight children of a coal miner, this girl, whose income is needed at home, had been unemployed for two years and three months.)

“I doubt if it helps to enjoy anything.”

Implications

These appraisals of the economic and cultural value of schooling bring to mind the old French proverb which, if our memory serves us right, translates into something that means “the appetite grows with eating.” Certainly, if these data mean anything, they mean that the more schooling youth receive the more likely they are to consider it valuable. They further suggest that many of the destructive judgments that young people have passed upon the schooling they have had may quite as logically have arisen from a sense of incompleteness as from a conviction that the schools have failed to meet their needs. We suspect, in fact, that their evaluations have been quantitative as well as qualitative, and that in both their censure and their praise the sense of completeness or incompleteness has tended to color their thought.

However, the question of whether an ex-student's sense of futility arises from a consciousness of the *inadequacy* of his education or whether it comes from a conviction that his school has failed to give him the *kind* of training he needed is somewhat beside the point. The discontent that springs from a youth's sense of educational incompleteness can be faced only by increasing the *quantity* of his education. The dissatisfaction that grows out of a youth's belief that the schools have failed to prepare him to cope with the bewildering complexities of his out-of-school world can be faced only by so changing the *quality* of our educational offerings as to adapt them to his interests and needs.

This means that provisions should be made that will result in larger numbers of youth staying in school for longer periods of time. Besides thus increasing the quantity of education a youth receives, steps should also be taken to so adjust educational programs to the youth's interests and needs that larger numbers will derive deeper satisfaction from their school experiences.

Our data suggest that many schools are so organized at present that young people have to go through the whole school program before they can be led to see any genuine value in it. This inevitably creates a sense of inadequacy among the majority of young people who drop out shortly after the completion of the elementary school. The answer is the development of educational programs so closely related to everyday living that each school year, instead of being a means to some more or less remote end, becomes in fact an end in itself.

All of which adds up to the conclusions that the consideration of other data has forced upon us: A more genuine equality of educational opportunity should be provided for all groups of youth, and more realistic and satisfying programs should be devised to meet their needs.

SHOULD SEX EDUCATION BE TAUGHT IN SCHOOLS?

As far as young people are concerned the answer, again, is "yes." Out of every twenty youth interviewed, fifteen wanted it, four did not, and one had no opinion. The large majority were not only convinced that instruction on sex should be provided by the schools, but they had fairly definite ideas as to the school level at which this instruction should begin. Almost 30 per cent (28.7) of those who believed it should be taught thought that it should begin somewhere in the elementary school. About 60 per cent (61.9) preferred to see it begin in the high school. The remaining 10 per cent either wanted it started in college or had no idea where it should begin.

As with the data on all our questions, a careful analysis reveals significant differences in the responses made by youth in various groups. A general picture of the responses to this question is presented in Table 27.

WHAT ABOUT SEX EDUCATION IN SCHOOLS?

RESPONSES OF MALES

RESPONSES OF FEMALES

YES



NO



NO OPINION



EACH FIGURE REPRESENTS THE OPINIONS OF 5 % OF EACH SEX GROUP

Some of the factors that appear to influence a youth's attitude toward the inclusion of sex education in school curricula are enumerated below:

Sex. There is no significant difference in the attitudes of the male and female youth. Less than 20 per cent of each group would have sex education excluded from school instruction.

TABLE 27—ATTITUDE TOWARD SEX EDUCATION IN SCHOOLS

Classification of youth	Percentage of youth			To begin in*			
	Not to be taught	To be taught	No opinion	Elementary school	High school	College	Level not stated
All youth.....	19.4	74.8	5.8	28.7	61.9	3.4	6.0
Male.....	19.5	73.7	6.8	25.5	64.7	4.0	5.8
Female.....	19.3	76.0	4.7	31.8	59.2	2.9	6.1
White.....	20.4	74.9	4.7	26.2	65.1	3.8	4.9
Negro.....	13.9	74.7	11.4	42.2	44.3	1.4	12.1
16-year-olds.....	22.6	70.9	6.5	23.4	69.0	3.4	4.2
18-year-olds.....	18.3	77.6	4.1	24.3	67.7	3.7	4.3
20-year-olds.....	16.9	77.7	5.4	28.3	63.3	3.1	5.3
22-year-olds.....	20.2	73.3	6.5	29.8	60.0	3.6	6.6
24-year-olds.....	17.1	76.2	6.7	36.3	51.8	2.6	9.3
Farm.....	22.4	65.0	12.6	29.6	57.0	2.7	10.7
Village.....	16.7	76.7	6.6	25.5	64.4	3.6	6.5
Town.....	15.8	79.3	4.9	27.3	61.0	5.0	6.7
City.....	20.2	77.5	2.3	30.1	63.0	3.2	3.7
Parents' religion:							
Jewish.....	15.5	83.9	0.6	32.1	62.3	3.2	2.4
Protestant.....	17.0	76.6	6.4	29.1	61.4	3.2	6.3
Mixed affiliations.....	22.5	72.4	5.1	27.1	63.1	3.2	6.6
Catholic.....	26.3	70.0	3.7	26.8	63.7	4.3	5.2
No affiliation.....	26.2	62.9	10.9	28.0	59.4	5.6	7.0
Out-of-school youth:							
Less than 6th grade.....	25.7	53.0	21.3	38.3	39.0	2.8	19.9
8th grade.....	22.9	70.8	6.3	32.5	60.0	2.5	5.0
12th grade graduate.....	16.1	81.8	2.1	24.7	67.8	3.2	4.3
1 year ^b	15.2	82.5	2.3	27.1	61.8	4.2	6.9
2 or 3 years ^b	10.7	87.6	1.7	39.0	52.6	4.3	4.1
4 or more years ^b	5.1	94.7	0.2	39.5	50.9	4.8	4.8

* Percentages based on youth who favored sex instruction in schools.

^b Beyond high school graduation.

Race. One of the smallest proportions of negative responses was found among the Negroes. Less than 14 per cent (13.9) were opposed. This fact acquires additional significance when it is known that 85 (or 70 per cent) of the 120 youth who *admitted* they were unmarried mothers or fathers, were Negroes.

Grade attainment. The percentages revealing a favorable attitude increase pro-

gressively from 53, for those who left school below the sixth-grade level, to 95 for those who had four or more years beyond high school graduation. This suggests that the higher the educational level attained and, presumably, the more generally enlightened young people are, the more positive their feeling that sex education should be made a regular part of the educational program.

On probably no subject was there such a wealth of surprisingly realistic and intelligent comment. A few statements made by the large majority of youth who favored the inclusion of sex education in schools are set down below.

"Yes, knowledge is so much better than mystery."

"School never taught me anything about my body. I can tell you how to cut up an ant or a caterpillar, but I can't tell you anything about myself."

"Should be taught just like biology."

"It should be drummed into them so continually that it would bore them as much as arithmetic."

"There ought to be classes for parents. They are the ones who need it."

"Sex education should start being taught in the elementary schools, because so many parents are ignorant on this subject, and others are so old-fashioned that they feel that such things shouldn't be talked about." (A single, colored girl of 20 who left school because of pregnancy. She has three children.)

"I heard all about it before I went to high school. I learned it the wrong way."

"It would cut down all this rubbish that's printed about sex."

"It should be taught when the kids are old enough not to be too silly about it. Of course, it should be in separate classes."

"I know I didn't know enough. I didn't believe it even when they told me my baby was coming."

"Nobody told me anything, and I had to get married because I was going to have a baby."

"It should be begun very quietly, early, so it isn't such a shock to the kids."

"If you get sex out in the open, it keeps people from having a distorted attitude."

The attitude of the 20 per cent who considered that sex education should not be made a part of the school curriculum is suggested by the following comments:

"It oughtn't to be taught in school . . . school teachers haven't any children and they don't get married. Their [young people's] parents should be made to tell them."

"Let 'em find out for themselves."

"Should have reading matter on sex available at schools so that young people could get it if they wanted."

"Mother knows the child and every child is different. Teacher can only talk to group. This way would be bad."

"I don't think it should be taught in school, but I think there should be some sort of bureau where young people can go when they are planning to get married."

"Should not be taught, because you'd learn too much orneriness."

"That's a home problem."

"They get it quick enough anyway."

THE SOCIAL SIGNIFICANCE OF LOW GRADE ATTAINMENT

RELATION OF THE FATHER'S OCCUPATION TO THE YOUTH'S GRADE ATTAINMENT

In a previous section of this chapter, we considered how the social and economic background of the youth and his family was related to his educational progress. We said something about the apparent existence of social and economic forces that tend to freeze social levels and to hold young people in the grip of the same restrictions to which their parents had been subjected.

TABLE 28—OUT-OF-SCHOOL YOUTH WHO COMPLETED SPECIFIED GRADES, ACCORDING
TO THE OCCUPATIONS OF THEIR FATHERS

Grade completed	Percentage of youth in each group								
	Prof.- tech.	Mana- gerial	Sales	Office	Skilled	Semi- skilled	Un- skilled	Farm laborer	Farm operator
Below 6th.....	—	2.1	0.8	0.6	9.1	7.0	26.0	24.9	26.1
6th grade.....	0.4	5.6	0.6	1.0	18.2	13.5	22.7	11.5	21.9
7th grade.....	0.5	4.6	1.3	1.1	19.3	12.6	16.6	9.8	31.8
8th grade.....	1.9	9.9	2.2	2.0	29.3	18.6	15.3	3.4	14.4
9th grade.....	1.8	9.8	3.4	2.9	32.2	16.4	11.0	2.0	17.1
10th or 11th.....	3.1	14.8	4.2	4.8	32.1	14.9	8.8	2.0	11.1
11th graduate.....	2.5	15.1	3.7	6.1	22.2	5.0	4.1	0.7	39.1
12th graduate.....	6.5	21.9	6.4	7.8	27.7	13.2	4.5	0.6	8.6
1 year*.....	12.4	31.0	6.8	9.1	20.0	3.8	2.4	0.3	13.0
2 or 3 years*.....	15.2	28.2	8.4	9.8	12.8	4.9	3.2	—	12.8
4 or more years*..	23.7	34.8	5.7	8.8	11.8	3.1	1.0	—	9.0

* Beyond high school graduation.

From a glance across the horizontal lines of Table 28, it will be seen that the out-of-school youth, whose grade attainment was relatively low (the completion of the ninth grade or less), were largely recruited from families whose fathers were employed in the low income occupations. Over 93 per cent of the youth who had left school before they had completed the sixth grade had fathers who were either skilled, semi-skilled, or unskilled laborers, or who were farm owners, farm tenants, or farm laborers. At the other extreme, the majority (84.8 per cent) of the college graduates were the children of fathers who were in the professional-technical, managerial, sales, office, or skilled labor groups.

A comparison of the unskilled and semi-skilled groups with the professional-technical and managerial groups clearly indicates the extent to which the youth's

grade level has been influenced, if not in a large measure determined, by the occupation of his father.¹

RELATION OF THE YOUTH'S GRADE ATTAINMENT TO THE OCCUPATION HE WILL FOLLOW

With the fact established that the youth's grade attainment is influenced by the nature of his father's job and the amount, therefore, of his father's income, another trip around our vicious circle is begun. We dig a little deeper and we discover that young people who had relatively little schooling have usually gone into the low wage occupations. The data presented in Table 29 deal only with the youth who were found to be employed at the time of the interview. A cursory examination of this table will reveal how clearly the youth's grade attainment is associated, not only with the nature of his father's job, but with the kind of work which *he himself will follow*.

TABLE 29—OCCUPATIONAL DISTRIBUTION OF OUT-OF-SCHOOL EMPLOYED YOUTH ACCORDING TO THE SCHOOL GRADES THEY HAD COMPLETED

Grade completed	Percentage of youth in each grade group							Percentage base
	Prof. or tech.	Office or sales	Managerial	Skilled	Semi-skilled	Domestic	Unskilled	
Less than 6th.....	—	1.3	2.2	1.8	14.6	17.8	61.8	398
6th.....	—	6.5	1.9	4.8	27.8	15.8	43.2	310
7th.....	0.4	6.2	5.4	5.2	28.9	16.9	37.0	698
8th.....	2.0	12.4	2.8	6.0	40.2	15.8	20.8	564
9th.....	2.2	23.1	4.6	4.2	41.5	9.2	15.2	499
10th or 11th.....	1.6	28.3	3.4	7.3	34.0	15.1	10.3	803
11th graduate.....	1.6	48.6	7.7	2.0	17.7	10.0	12.4	549
12th graduate.....	5.7	47.2	4.2	3.5	25.8	9.3	4.3	1,059
1 year beyond *...	5.6	68.2	4.5	2.5	11.6	5.1	2.5	198
2 or 3 years *.....	45.0	35.2	3.8	3.8	7.0	3.1	2.1	287
4 or more years *..	59.4	23.1	10.6	2.2	2.9	1.1	0.7	273

* Beyond high school graduation.

¹ Supplementing these data from another source, it is worthwhile to examine the findings of a Commission sponsored study of 30,000 Pennsylvania students. Using the Chapman-Sims Socio-Economic Scale as an index of the family's socio-economic background, Harlan Updegraff, the director, discovered a clear-cut relationship existing between the grades youth complete in school and the socio-economic level of the families from which they come.

Grade Completed	Median Score
6th grade	1.9
7th grade	2.3
8th grade	2.8
9th grade	2.9
10th grade	3.8
11th grade	4.9
12th grade	5.0
13th grade (Freshman).....	7.5
14th grade (Sophomore).....	7.2

While the median score (as indicated by the Chapman-Sims Socio-Economic Scale) of the youth who had reached the college level was well above 7, the median score of those who had dropped out at the completion of the sixth grade was less than 2.

Reading across the horizontal lines of figures in Table 29, we see how large a proportion of youth left school at the early grades and are now employed in the low income occupations. Of the 398 employed youth who left school before they completed the sixth grade, 94.2 per cent were found to be working at unskilled, semi-skilled, or domestic-personal jobs. Of the 564 employed youth who had left school at the completion of the eighth grade, over 75 per cent (76.8) were discovered working in the same occupations. Turning to one of the lower horizontal lines of percentages that deal with the youth who had attained the higher grade levels, one finds that almost 60 per cent of the 1,608 employed youth, who were eleventh- and twelfth-grade high school graduates, were employed in such higher income jobs as professional-technical, office and sales, and managerial work.

It should be obvious, without any further analysis of these data, that, so far as the probability of getting one of the higher income jobs is concerned, grade attainment is a vital factor. If there should seem to be any doubt about it, the following brief table, covering almost six thousand employed youth, should be illuminating.

TABLE 30—MEDIAN SCHOOL GRADE COMPLETED BY
EMPLOYED OUT-OF-SCHOOL YOUTH ACCORDING TO
THE YOUTH'S OCCUPATIONAL FIELD

Youth's occupation	Median grade	Number of cases on which median is based
Professional-technical.....	15.4	409
Office-sales.....	12.1	1,548
Managerial *.....	11.4	254
Skilled.....	10.2	242
Semi-skilled.....	9.8	1,474
Domestic-personal.....	9.2	670
Relief projects.....	8.1	334
Unskilled.....	7.5	1,041
Total.....	10.5	5,972

* Includes farm owners and managers.

Starting with the highest occupational level of the professional and technical workers, and going down the occupational scale to the unskilled laborers, one finds an unbroken downward trend in the median grades attained by the youth in each occupational group. Between the two occupational extremes, there is a difference of almost eight grades.

The implications of these data can further be clarified by combining certain occupations into two groups. In one group, which we will call Group A, we will bring together our data on the youth employed in the professional-technical, office, and sales occupations. In the other, which we will call Group B, we will bring together data on

youth who were employed as unskilled, semi-skilled, and domestic—personal workers. Then, in a simple table of two columns, we will show the percentage of the workers who left school at specified levels, and who were found to be employed in one or another of these Group A and B occupations.

TABLE 31—OCCUPATIONAL DISTRIBUTION OF EMPLOYED YOUTH ACCORDING TO THE GRADES THEY HAD COMPLETED IN SCHOOL

Grade completed	Percentage of youth in each grade group	
	Occupation Group A ^a	Occupation Group B ^b
Less than 6th grade.....	1.3	94.2
6th grade.....	6.5	86.8
7th grade.....	6.6	82.8
8th grade.....	14.4	76.8
9th grade.....	25.3	65.9
10th or 11th grade not graduate.....	29.9	59.4
11th grade graduate.....	50.2	40.1
12th grade graduate.....	52.9	39.4
1 year beyond high school graduation.....	73.8	19.2
2 or 3 years beyond graduation.....	80.2	12.2
4 or more years beyond graduation.....	82.5	4.7

^a Includes professional—technical, office, and sales workers.

^b Includes unskilled, semi-skilled, domestic and personal workers.

The percentages in Table 31 will need very little analysis or interpretation. They show a progressive increase in the proportion of youth from the higher educational levels who are working in the generally more lucrative jobs. Only one-seventh (14.4 per cent) of the employed youth who had dropped out of school at the completion of the eighth grade were found to be working in Group A occupations. In one way or another, all these figures show, with almost too much conviction, how profoundly the nature of the youth's occupation is affected by the amount of schooling he has received.

There has been no impulse on our part to suggest that the economic status of the youth's parents is the only factor that operates to determine the amount of schooling he will receive and therefore the occupational field in which he will eventually work. There are other factors, some of which we have discussed in preceding pages. Still another matter, which unquestionably operates to control the scholastic and vocational destinies of young people, is the factor of native intelligence.

Everyone knows that intellectual endowments differ with individuals. Every one knows that, *all other things being equal*, the youth who are the more generously endowed with native ability will, as a general rule, enjoy a larger measure of success than the mentally deficient can reasonably expect to enjoy.

Yet, as true as these things are, to assume that scholastic and vocational awards are distributed on the basis of mental endowment is either to confess ignorance of the facts or a reluctance to face them.

Twenty years ago, Professor Counts of the University of Chicago pointed to the selective character of the American high school population. He found that the principle behind this selective process was *not* intellectual, but economic. Quite recently, in 1936, Harlan Updegraff, working under the sponsorship of the American Youth Commission, made a careful study of 30,000 students in Pennsylvania. Among other things, he discovered that, in the matter of providing college training to those intellectually capable of profiting by such training, the school program was 38 per cent efficient. While 105 out of each 1,000 high school graduates went on to college and successfully completed the first two years, there were 174 out of each 1,000 who did not go to college, usually because they were financially unable to do so. *The 174 who did not go to college were found to have mental abilities that promised as high a degree of scholastic success as the 105 who did.*

That mental endowment is a factor in determining the scholastic and vocational success of the individual no competent observer will deny. Yet, to imagine that this factor, operating alone, is always sufficiently strong to cancel out the depressing and retarding effects of low economic status is to close one's eyes to reality.

Some of our most exciting success stories have been written about young men whose passion for getting on and whose capacity to absorb punishment have enabled them to "crash the gates" of the restrictions that have closed them in. The statesmanship of Lincoln and the poetry of Keats, arising from the humble depths of log cabins and stables, have not only been an inspiration to underprivileged youth, but they have led us to suspect that there must be some mysterious causal relationship between lowly beginnings and exalted goals. The facts suggest that the tendency is quite the reverse, and that the "gate crashers" are the rather lonely exceptions to the rule.

HOW SCHOOL WITHDRAWALS AFFECT UNEMPLOYMENT

Some of the social and economic advantages of extending the time youth spend in school have been discussed in previous sections. To these might well be added the fact that early departures from school tend to depress the labor market. The brief table that follows shows the median ages at which young people leaving school at various levels got their first full-time jobs.

Among other things, these data suggest that, by keeping youth in school through high school, their entry into the labor market is delayed by about three years beyond what would have been the case had they left school below the sixth-grade level.

Based on about 75,000,000 Americans *over* the age of 21, the United States Office of Education has estimated that the median grade attainment for the whole

group was the completion of the eighth grade. Our data disclose that the median grade attained by the youth between the ages of 16 and 24 was the completion of the ninth grade—an extremely significant difference and indicating a definitely hopeful trend.

Quite apart from the encouraging nature of this trend, however, is the fact that, from our data, it would appear that more than half of the youth who left school at the completion of the eighth grade got full-time jobs before they were 17 years old, and half of the ninth graders went to work at the same age.

TABLE 32—MEDIAN AGES AT WHICH YOUTH GOT THEIR FIRST FULL-TIME JOBS AFTER LEAVING SCHOOL AT SPECIFIED GRADES

Grade completed	Median age
Less than 6th grade.	15.5
6th grade.	16.2
7th grade.	16.2
8th grade.	16.7
9th grade.	17.0
10th or 11th grade not graduate.	17.4
11th grade graduate.	18.2
12th grade graduate.	18.7
1 year beyond high school graduation.	19.6
2 or 3 years beyond high school graduation.	20.6
4 or more years beyond high school graduation.	21.9

Thus it appears that whether young people who leave school at the lower grade levels succeed or fail in their efforts to secure employment, the result is what might reasonably be interpreted as an ultimate social and economic loss. If they get jobs, they displace adults and thus aggravate the national problem of unemployment. If they fail, they are forced to dawdle through a period of wasted years. In either case, society stands to lose.

SUMMARY

The employment of the youth's father in one of the lower or higher income occupations profoundly affects the amount of schooling the youth is likely to receive. The amount of his schooling will, in turn, determine to a marked degree the kind of job he will get and, therefore, the income he will earn. Out of school for a longer period, youth leaving at the lower levels tend to marry earlier and have larger families. All these factors threaten, in their turn, to impose similar restrictions on the opportunities of the youth's children. Though often upset by the force of individual effort, the tendency seems to be toward social and economic stratification and the strengthening of social barriers.

There are cogent social, as well as political and economic, reasons for making every effort to break up this conspiracy of forces that tends to keep certain groups more or less permanently submerged. A decent social conscience demands that equality of opportunity be made more real. The enduring health and efficiency of a democracy demands an awareness of fundamental issues without which the vote must eventually become a meaningless gesture and the pawn of demagogues. Then, too, the weight of the national burden of unemployment could be substantially decreased by the elimination of large numbers of school-age youth from the labor market.² All this adds up to the desirability of society's taking a hand in the development of a national program of constructive and profitable activity for its youth.

In such a program, the schools can make a much larger contribution than they are now making. Before they can be expected to exert their maximum influence, steps should be taken to insure a more genuine equality of educational opportunity. Far too many youth, who are both capable and desirous of further education, are out of school and in the labor market for the simple reason that the low economic status of their families made continued schooling impossible.

A start in the direction of making further schooling possible for all youth has already been made by the student aid activities of the National Youth Administration. The effect of these activities has been to provide educational opportunities for a limited number of youth in the economically submerged groups.

There still remains, however, the substantial number of young people for whom the present school programs have little or no appeal. Their dropping out of school at undesirably low levels is the result, not so much of economic necessity, as of sheer indifference. For them, the obvious solution is the development of school programs that are more realistically adapted to their interests and needs.

The steps suggested would result in a larger number of youth remaining in school for longer periods, and their ultimate effects would, in all probability, be the elevation of the national educational level and a reduction of unemployment.

² It is not intended to assume that total employment is a fixed quantity of persons and that additional persons cannot be absorbed as wage workers. It is recognized that when circumstances in the economic system favor the extension of investments and the exploitation of new resources a period of substantially full employment may arise. In the twenties the amount of unemployment was comparatively small. However, the present situation is characterized by acute unemployment, and efforts to restore employment to normal proportions have shown only partial success. Resort to work-spreading through shorter hours and partial employment has been widespread. Under such circumstances the introduction of additional workers could be successful only in those areas of skilled employment where there might be a scarcity of labor. The greatest unemployment tends to be in groups of unskilled persons. Consequently, the early employment of youth under such circumstances will tend to depress a labor market which is already depressed and create unemployment among older persons who will be thrown out of work or forced to accept very low wages in some other occupation than the one in which they are accustomed to work. If the youth can be kept in school and prepared for more skilled work they may be absorbed by industry at a later time in occupations where there is a relative scarcity of employees without tending to depress a labor market already oversupplied with workers.

The dangers in any superficial, hit-or-miss program for a younger generation of any country may be subtle, but they are very real. There is ample evidence in the governments and social systems of certain nondemocratic countries to suggest the possible consequences of continued indifference. Only a pathetic smugness can lead one to suspect that anything that has happened elsewhere cannot happen in America. An efficient democracy, like a certain philosopher's idea of immortality, is an achievement, not a bequest, and only a people that strives mightily for it will ever attain it.

CHAPTER 4

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Y O U T H A T W O R K



IF ONE HUNDRED American youth were selected at random, and each one were asked if he or she believed there was a youth problem, our data indicate that sixty-five would not only recognize the existence of such a problem, but would also define it. Twenty-five would assert that there was no problem, while ten would state that they didn't know whether such a problem existed or not.

If a hundred of these youth who recognized the existence of a youth problem were each asked to state what, in his or her opinion, was the crux of the problem, our data further indicate that sixty-five would characterize it as basically economic. To many, this would mean jobs—any jobs. To some, it would mean wages that would permit the enjoyment of a higher standard of living. To others, it would mean jobs that provided a deeper sense of security and a more hopeful promise of vocational adjustment. And to still others, it would mean an income sufficient to make marriage or further education possible.

The general problem of economic security is particularly acute for young people for the reason that they so often lack the background of training and experience so necessary to both placement and vocational progress. Hundreds of thousands who are now in the labor market could better serve their own and society's interests by remaining longer in school. But, through a lack of interest or opportunity, they have left their classrooms, and are in active competition with adults for the jobs which in our most prosperous times are hardly enough to go around.

We have indicated elsewhere that there are sound economic reasons for making it possible for larger numbers of our young people to remain in school for longer periods. To us, a general expansion of educational opportunity for all our youth promises to yield substantial economic as well as cultural returns.

Yet, for better or worse, millions of youth are now in the American labor market. Constituting, as they do, a very considerable part of the national youth population, it is appropriate that we make an effort to find out something about them—the kinds of jobs they hold, how old they are when they start to work, the wages they receive, and what they think about the work they do.

The essentially economic character of the problems that many of our youth are facing is suggested by the following comments:

"There is such a problem to make a living these days that there seems no time left to make a home."

"Young people can't get jobs because they haven't had any experience, and employers want only experienced people. More vocational training in the high schools, and financial assistance for those who have to leave is the best solution."

"Finding work a fellow is best fitted for is a problem. When I got out of school, it was impossible for me to get any work I was trained for."

"This is an age of specialization. In the old days, the children stepped into their parents' shoes and did the sort of work their parents did. Now the young people have to go out and find their own jobs, and there are very few available. Most youth lack training."

"I think all this talk about youth being irresponsible is just a lot of cheap prattle and not based on facts. All youth need is something to do."

"There is nothing to do after youth leave school. They would take any job if they could get it, but they are developing a loafing habit."

"Jobs play the biggest part in your life and they're so uncertain. When you've looked and looked, you get the feeling that nobody has any use for you. It takes away all your self-confidence."

YOUTH IN THE LABOR MARKET

In view of the continued prominence of the problem of unemployment, it is important that we inquire, first of all, into the extent to which youth throw the weight of their numbers upon an already glutted labor market. Before attempting this it would be well, however, to define exactly what we mean by this term "youth in the labor market."

To be considered in this group, youth must be permanently out of school. They may have either full-time or part-time jobs, or they may be totally unemployed. In short, they are available workers.

For our purposes, a full-time job is any gainful employment of thirty hours a week or more at which the youth worked during the week preceding the interview. A part-time job is gainful employment at which the youth worked at least five hours but less than thirty hours during the same week. The unemployed included the youth who wanted jobs but could not find them. If they worked less than five hours or not at all the week preceding interview, they were considered unemployed.

As previously noted, "youth in the labor market" excludes all students, even though they had employment outside school hours. It excludes all homemakers, even though they were actually desirous of employment. It also excludes the "voluntarily idle" who, for one reason or another, did not want jobs.

STATUS OF ALL YOUTH

Table 33 presents, in some detail, a picture of what the young people of our sample were found to be doing when they were interviewed. The outstanding implications of this table, which covers *all* the youth interviewed, are enumerated below:

1. The rate of employment increases, while the proportion of students decreases, with age.

2. The proportion of the voluntarily idle is as numerically negligible in the younger as in the older groups.

3. About two out of every ten of the entire group are students.

4. Slightly more than four out of every ten have full-time jobs.

5. Approximately two out of every ten are unemployed.

TABLE 33—EMPLOYMENT STATUS OF ALL YOUTH AT TIME OF INTERVIEW ACCORDING TO AGE AT LAST BIRTHDAY

Age at last birthday	Status of youth							Percent-age base
	Youth in the labor market				Other youth			
	Employed youth			Unem- ployed	Home- makers	Stu- dents	Voluntarily idle	
	Full- time	Part- time	Total					
16.....	8.9	4.2	13.1	16.8	3.0	65.9	1.2	1,514
17.....	20.0	6.2	26.2	24.8	5.2	42.3	1.5	1,422
18.....	33.0	6.9	39.9	25.2	9.1	24.0	1.8	1,481
19.....	43.6	7.4	51.0	21.2	11.5	14.2	2.1	1,657
20.....	46.2	5.5	51.7	21.2	14.9	10.7	1.5	1,636
21.....	48.7	6.6	55.3	18.1	16.6	7.5	2.5	1,619
22.....	51.2	7.1	58.3	16.7	17.8	5.0	2.2	1,399
23.....	55.8	5.8	61.6	15.4	18.0	3.5	1.5	1,240
24.....	55.8	5.3	61.1	15.1	20.4	1.5	1.9	1,545
All ages.....	40.3	6.1	46.4	19.5	12.9	19.4	1.8	13,513

Age Distribution of Youth in the Labor Market

From the 13,513 young people considered in Table 33, let us exclude the 1,746 homemakers, the 2,620 students, and the 246 who were voluntarily idle. This leaves us with the youth in the labor market—those who have jobs and those who want them. The total is 8,901. Using this number as a base, we find that the proportion of youth in the various age groups who had full-time jobs increases for each older age group.

In spite of the fact that most of the 13,528 young people considered in this study were interviewed at a period when the influence of industrial recovery and the impetus of agricultural activity were being generally felt, Table 34 reveals that of every ten youth in the labor market approximately four (38.8 per cent) were not employed on full-time jobs, and three of these four had no employment whatever. When only the youth 16 to 20 years of age are considered, we find that of every ten youth in the labor market approximately five were employed on full-time jobs, one had some kind of part-time work, and the remaining four had neither the constructive activities of the schools nor the absorption of jobs to fill their empty days.

Any attempt to estimate the number of unemployed youth in the United States on the basis of a state sample involves considerable danger. No effort will be made therefore to apply the percentage of our unemployed (as indicated by Table 33) to the more than 20,000,000 young people in the United States. We shall confine ourselves to the guess that, in all probability, no less than 3,000,000 of these 20,000,000 youth between the ages of 16 and 24 are out of school and without any employment

TABLE 34—EMPLOYMENT STATUS OF THE YOUTH IN THE LABOR MARKET
ACCORDING TO AGE

Age at last birthday	Percentage of each age group			Total	Percentage base
	Employed youth		Unemployed youth		
	Full-time ^a	Part-time ^b			
16.....	29.8	13.9	56.3	100.0	453
17.....	39.2	12.1	48.7	100.0	725
18.....	50.7	10.6	38.7	100.0	964
19.....	60.4	10.2	29.4	100.0	1,197
20.....	63.4	7.5	29.1	100.0	1,192
21.....	66.4	9.0	24.6	100.0	1,188
22.....	68.4	9.4	22.2	100.0	1,049
23.....	72.4	7.6	20.0	100.0	956
24.....	73.2	7.0	19.8	100.0	1,177
Employed-unemployed.....	61.2	9.3	29.5	100.0	8,901

^a Thirty hours or more during week preceding interview.

^b Five, and less than thirty, hours during week preceding interview.

whatever. Whether an adequate unemployment census would reveal the actual number to be as high as 4,000,000 or as low as 2,000,000, there would still exist an appalling example of wasted human resources and of youthful energies that are being neither profitably directed by the schools nor utilized by industry.

EMPLOYED YOUTH

OCCUPATIONS OF ALL EMPLOYED YOUTH

In Table 34, we saw that 61.2 per cent of the youth in the labor market were employed on full-time jobs. If, to this group, are added the 9.3 per cent who had part-time employment, we find that slightly more than 70 per cent (70.5) of the *available* workers were employed.

At this point, it is appropriate to show the extent to which these employed youth were found to be working in the various occupational fields.

It will be seen from Table 35 that large numbers of employed youth were working in the generally lower paid occupational fields; 37.4 per cent were working in unskilled, domestic-personal, relief projects, and other poorly paid occupations. The second largest number of workers in a single occupational field were the 1,472 semi-skilled workers, who constituted 23.5 per cent of the total group. Although

TABLE 35—OCCUPATIONAL DISTRIBUTION OF
ALL EMPLOYED YOUTH

Occupation of youth	Percentage	Number
"White-collar".....	35.3	2,217
Professional-technical.....	6.6	411
Proprietary-managerial.....	4.0	253
Office-sales.....	24.7	1,553
"Overall".....	64.7	4,055
Skilled.....	3.8	241
Semi-skilled.....	23.5	1,472
Unskilled.....	16.6	1,041
Domestic-personal.....	10.7	669
Relief projects.....	5.3	332
Other.....	4.8	300
Total.....	100.0	6,272

workers in this field are often understood to receive lower wages than the office and sales workers, the semi-skilled workers of our sample were found to be better paid, generally, than those who were employed in office and sales occupations. The remaining 39.1 per cent were employed as skilled laborers and in what are usually referred to as white-collar jobs.

OCCUPATIONS OF PART-TIME WORKERS

Most of the data presented in the following pages will be concerned with the total group of employed youth, the part-time workers being included with those working a minimum of 30 hours a week. It is therefore pertinent at this point to examine the matter of part-time employment.

With the exception of the managerial and proprietary fields, the number of part-time workers was rather evenly distributed among all occupations. A relatively high percentage of part-time workers (42.2 per cent) was found among the employees on relief projects. This is partly explained by the inclusion of the youth who were participating in the work program of the National Youth Administration. The smallest proportion of part-time workers (2.9 per cent) was found in the managerial and proprietary fields.

In all the other occupational groups, the proportion of part-time workers

amounted to between 10 and 15 per cent of the total number of workers. This will mean, among other things, that the factor of part-time employment will not materially affect our comparisons of the median hours worked and the wages received by workers in various occupational fields.

THE WAGES YOUTH RECEIVE

In a later section, we will discuss how employed youth feel about their jobs. We will find a surprisingly general feeling of discontent. It is our guess that at least a part of this discontent may be traced to the wages they received. The median weekly wage for the total group was \$12.96.

The median wage, or the median number of hours worked, or the median anything else, for that matter, can quite easily be misinterpreted. With respect to this median weekly wage of \$12.96, for example, it should be borne in mind that half the 5,579 young people who reported money wages for the week preceding the interview were found to have received *less* than \$12.96, while the other half, of course, received more.

It should also be borne in mind that this general median wage of \$12.96 is based upon the wages reported by the 15 per cent of the employed group who were working on part-time jobs, as well as by the 85 per cent who had full-time employment. It should further be realized that this average reflects the weekly wages of such diversified elements in our youth population as the white and Negro, youth living in cities and on farms, lawyers and ditch diggers. It absorbs the pittance of the domestic servant as well as the relatively large salary of the young executive. If only the full-time white workers of both sexes are considered, this median weekly wage is raised from \$12.96 to \$15.48.

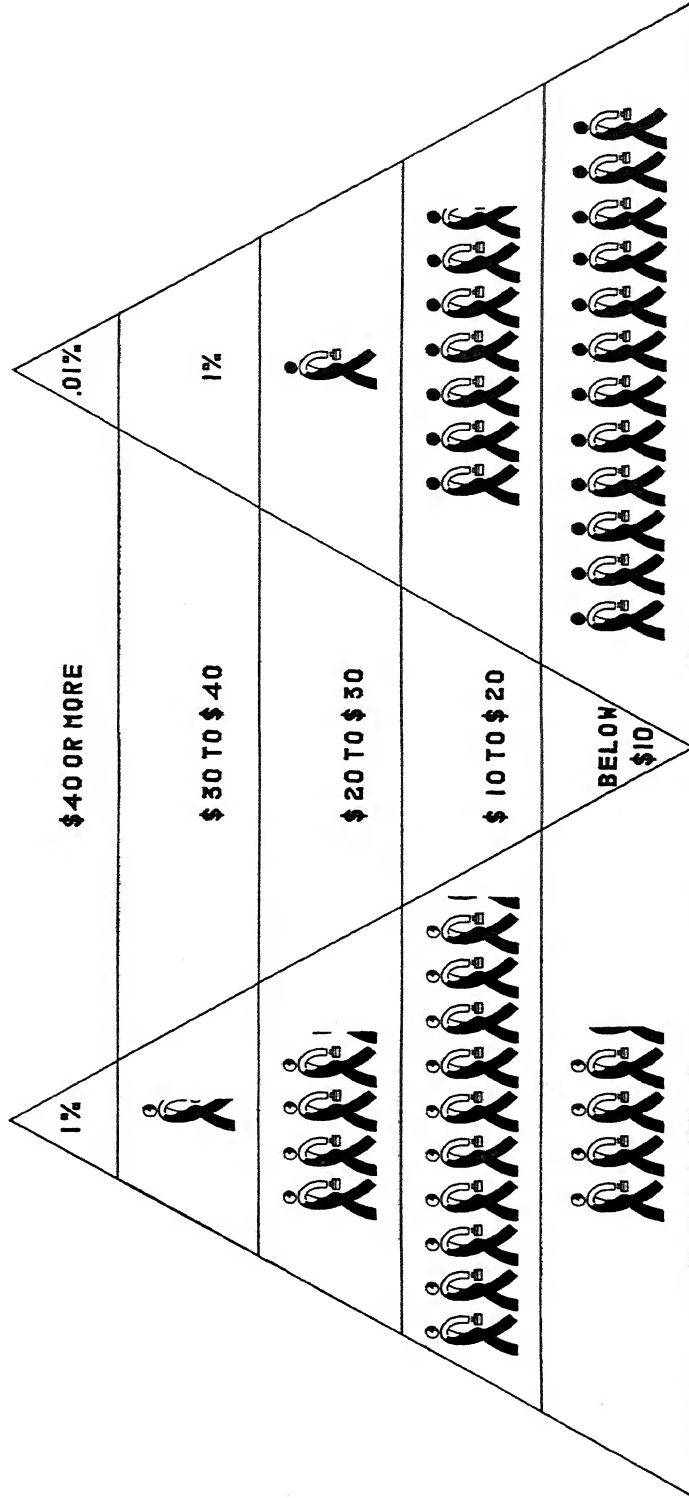
In computing the median wage, only cash wages were considered, and other items such as room and board were ignored. Of the employed youth who reported their earnings, 13 per cent stated that they received some income in addition to cash wages. This additional income was largely in the form of room, board, clothing, use of car, etc. Workers receiving additional income were usually workers on family farms, other agricultural workers, or domestic workers. Their numbers are not sufficiently large to affect our general findings on wages.

Although we shall confine ourselves, throughout this discussion, to the wages the youth received for the week preceding the interview, it is interesting to note that the wages they received for that week were generally representative of the wages they had received each week during the previous month. Eight out of ten (79.2 per cent) of the employed youth reported that their last week's wages were typical of their weekly wages over a month's time. One in ten (10.6 per cent) said they were higher than usual, and one in ten (10.2 per cent) said they were lower than usual.

PERCENTAGE OF YOUTH RECEIVING SPECIFIED WEEKLY WAGES

FULL-TIME WHITE WORKERS

FULL-TIME NEGRO WORKERS



EACH COMPLETE FIGURE REPRESENTS 5% OF THE WORKERS IN EACH RACE GROUP

Hence we know that our data on weekly wages are representative of at least the four weeks preceding the time of interview.

Estimated Annual Earnings of Youth in Various Groups

Although we know that large numbers of our employed youth were engaged in seasonal and temporary work, let us assume that they received pay for fifty-two weeks a year. On the basis of the median weekly wages about to be presented, the highest average yearly income for any of the groups listed in Table 36 would be only \$887. At the lower extreme, the average yearly income would be \$330.

TABLE 36—ESTIMATED YEARLY EARNINGS OF VARIOUS GROUPS

Classification of youth	Estimated yearly earnings
Married male.....	\$887
Male white.....	789
White youth.....	745
Male youth.....	707
Female white.....	686
All Youth.....	674
Female youth.....	625
Married female.....	620
Male Negro.....	453
Negro youth.....	415
Female Negro.....	330

FACTORS AFFECTING WAGES YOUTH RECEIVE

These data on wages received or hours worked, like those on questions previously discussed, acquire meaning and significance only when they are considered in relation to fundamental social groups. In the following pages we consider some of the outstanding factors which seem to influence the wages youth receive.

The Hours Youth Worked

The factor most commonly associated with the matter of wages is that of hours worked. In interviewing, great care was taken to assure ourselves that the data for wages received and hours worked covered exactly the same period.

As might be expected, whether a youth is working full or part time materially affects the size of his weekly pay envelope.

Of those who reported both the number of hours they worked and the wages they received, we find that white youth working full time earned approximately three times as much as white youth working part time (\$15.48 as compared with \$5.53). However, this direct relationship between hours worked and wages received holds true only to a limited extent.

THE WAGES RECEIVED AND HOURS

MEDIAN WEEKLY WAGES

MEDIAN WEEKLY HOURS

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EACH CLOCK REPRESENTS FIVE HOURS

One hundred and seventy-three, or almost 4 per cent of the 4,474 employed white youth interviewed, were found to have worked more than 76 hours the preceding week. The median weekly wage they had received was \$12.87. On the other hand, white youth who had worked between 38 and 42 hours per week had received a median wage of \$17.10.

TABLE 37—MEDIAN WEEKLY WAGE RECEIVED BY EMPLOYED WHITE AND NEGRO YOUTH WORKING PART TIME OR FULL TIME

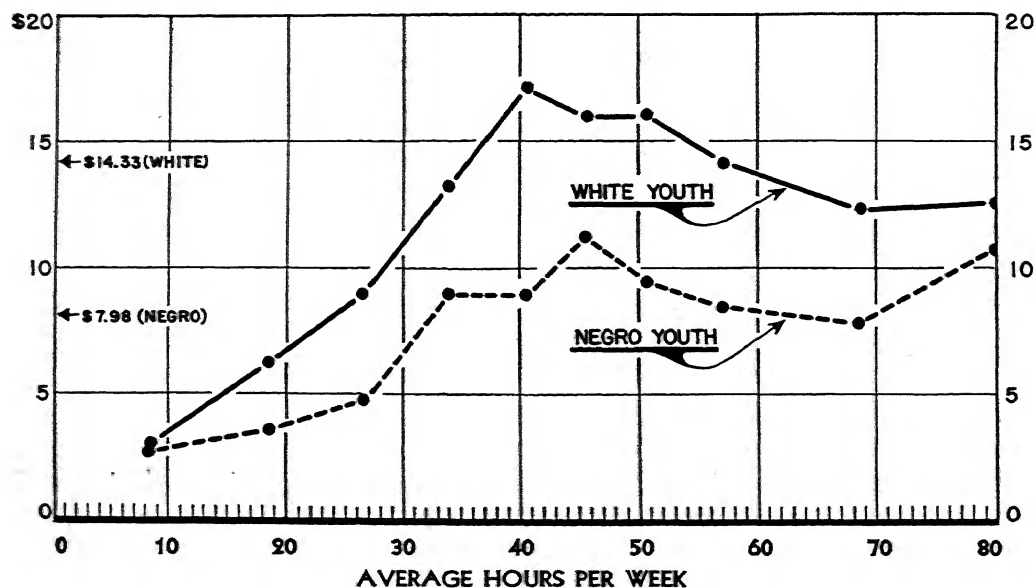
Part-time or full-time job	Median weekly wage		Percentage	
	White	Negro	White	Negro
Part-time (less than 30 hours).....	\$5.53	\$3.45	13.1	18.7
Full-time (30 hours or more).....	15.48	8.88	86.9	81.3
Total group.....	\$14.33	\$7.98	100.0	100.0
Number of youth reporting wages and hours.....			4,474	1,029

Up to a certain point, the lines of Figure 9 indicate that the longer youth work per week, the higher their weekly earnings. This holds true for white youth to the point of a 40-hour work week. From that point on, however, the longer they work, the

FIGURE 9

RELATION BETWEEN WAGES AND HOURS OF WHITE AND NEGRO YOUTH

AVERAGE WAGE PER WEEK
(MEDIAN)



less, as a rule, they receive. A similar tendency holds for the Negro youth. Perhaps it was the recognition of this trend that prompted a youth to remark that "it don't pay to work too much."

Youth's Occupational Field

The greatest differences in the median wages received show up when one considers the various occupational fields in which youth work. The average earnings of the proprietary and managerial group, for example, were two and a half times as large as the average earnings of the unskilled workers (\$21.50 as against \$8.53).

TABLE 38—MEDIAN WEEKLY WAGES AND HOURS OF EMPLOYED OUT-OF-SCHOOL YOUTH BY OCCUPATION

Occupational field	Median weekly wages	Median weekly hours	Number of youth
Proprietary—managerial ^a	\$21.50	57.8	168
Professional—technical	20.90	40.0	369
Skilled	17.17	42.9	226
Semi-skilled	15.67	41.3	1,423
Office-sales	14.49	43.7	1,449
Unskilled	8.53	51.5	975
Domestic—personal	7.54	51.1	619
Relief projects ^b	7.20	31.7	328
Total reporting wages and hours	\$12.96	42.8	5,557

^a Includes farm operators and owners.

^b Includes 137 part-time N.Y.A. workers.

If one ignores the 168 young people found employed in proprietary and managerial positions, one sees in Table 38 the same inverse relationship between hours worked and wages received that was mentioned a moment ago. Generally speaking, as wages go down, the number of working hours goes up. While the unskilled labor group received a median wage of \$8.53 and worked over 50 hours (51.5) to earn it, the youth in the professional and technical fields worked only 40 hours for substantially more than twice as much.

On the basis of a 40-hour maximum work week, and a \$15.00 minimum wage, an analysis of these data reveals that, for the majority of our employed youth, neither one of these standards is being met. In fact, more than half the total number of employed youth were found to be working *more* than this maximum number of hours, and more than half were receiving *less* than this minimum weekly wage.

When the youth working in the various occupational fields are broken down into sex and race groups, the matter of occupational field still remains the dominant factor in determining the wages they receive.

The median weekly wage for the white professional-technical male workers was \$22.59, while that of the white unskilled male workers was exactly \$9.00—a difference of over \$13.00. Among the females, the difference between the median weekly earnings of the white professional-technical workers and the white domestic-personal workers was slightly more than \$13.00 (\$20.67 as against \$7.66).

TABLE 39—MEDIAN WEEKLY WAGES OF EMPLOYED WHITE MALE AND FEMALE YOUTH ACCORDING TO THEIR OCCUPATIONAL FIELDS

Occupational field	Median weekly wage		Number of youth	
	Male white	Female white	Male white	Female white
Professional-technical.....	\$22.59	\$20.67	120	201
Proprietary-managerial.....	22.87	16.67	141	22
Office-sales.....	16.06	13.33	674	671
Skilled.....	17.36	^a	204	3
Semi-skilled.....	16.70	13.57	863	465
Unskilled.....	9.00	^a	575	3
Domestic-personal.....	14.03	7.66	71	226
Relief projects.....	8.47	4.56	178	57
Total.....	\$15.17	\$13.20	2,826	1,648

^a Median is not computed when base is less than 10.

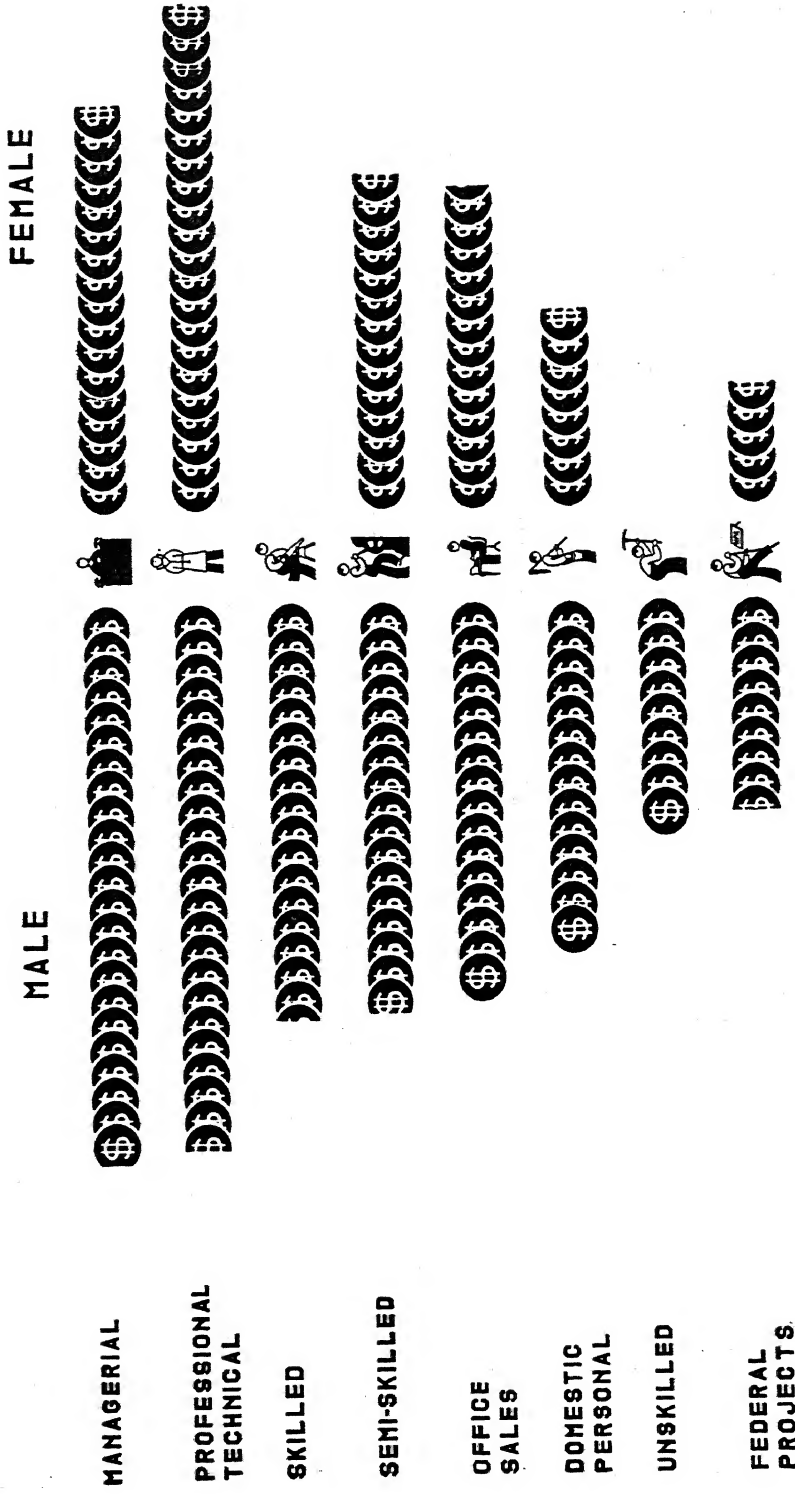
The same relationship between occupation and wages is evident among the Negro workers, although it should be remembered that the great majority of these workers were found to be employed on unskilled or domestic and personal jobs. A relatively small proportion were found to have invaded the higher occupational levels.

TABLE 40—MEDIAN WEEKLY WAGES OF EMPLOYED NEGRO YOUTH ACCORDING TO OCCUPATIONAL FIELD

Occupational field	Median weekly wage	Percentage specified in occupations	Number in specified occupations
Professional-technical.....	\$18.64	4.7	48
Skilled.....	15.00	1.3	13
Office-sales.....	11.18	7.4	76
Semi-skilled.....	9.45	9.6	99
Unskilled.....	7.97	36.9	380
Domestic-personal.....	6.55	30.6	315
Relief projects.....	4.91	8.9	92
Other.....	^a	0.6	6
Employed Negro youth...	\$7.98	100.0	1,029

^a Median is not computed when base is less than 10.

MEDIAN WEEKLY WAGES EMPLOYED WHITE YOUTH RECEIVED ON VARIOUS KINDS OF JOBS



EACH DISC REPRESENTS ONE DOLLAR

Although it will be seen from Table 40 that the Negro workers' median wage was generally lower than that paid the white youth, the wages they received were clearly related to the kind of work they were doing.

In concluding this discussion of the extent to which the occupational fields in which youth work affect the wages they receive, it should be profitable to present a close-up picture of the earnings of a specific group of workers. For this purpose, the 435 young people found employed as inside salespersons will serve as well as any other group.

TABLE 41—MEDIAN WEEKLY WAGES OF INSIDE SALESPERSONS
ACCORDING TO AGE AND SEX

Age	Median weekly wages		Median weekly hours	
	Males	Females	Males	Females
16.....	"	"	"	"
17.....	\$8.75	\$5.63	55.0	34.0
18.....	11.00	7.22	53.0	42.4
19.....	13.04	8.44	55.2	46.8
20.....	13.21	9.72	58.3	47.2
21.....	16.33	12.29	59.7	51.8
22.....	17.73	10.42	57.5	49.4
23.....	17.50	11.36	57.9	50.5
24.....	16.88	9.58	59.0	48.8
All ages.....	\$14.31	\$9.29	57.7	48.2

* Median not computed when base is less than 10.

A glance at these data on the median weekly wages of young men and women working behind the counters of our stores will show that the peak of their earning power was reached at the age of 22 for the males and 21 for the females. They further suggest that the most that half the young men can expect to earn is less than \$15 a week, while the maximum weekly wage of half the young women is less than \$10.

In none of the age groups considered were the young men found, on an average, to be working less than 50 hours. In fact, the *median* number of weekly hours, in some age groups, was found to be very close to 60, which means, of course, that a large proportion were working *more* than 60 hours a week. Although the number of weekly hours worked by the young women was less excessive, the great majority were working more than 44 hours a week.

Sex

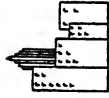
No matter how we consider our wage data, and no matter how fine a degree of control is exerted on the analysis, a sex difference in favor of the male per-

THE WAGES EMPLOYED YOUTH RECEIVE AND THE HOURS THEY WORK PER WEEK

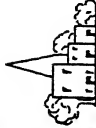
MEDIAN WEEKLY WAGES

MEDIAN WEEKLY HOURS

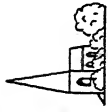
CITY
YOUTH



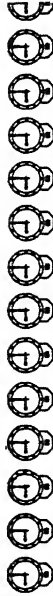
VILLAGE
YOUTH



TOWN
YOUTH



FARM
YOUTH



ALL
YOUTH



EACH DISC REPRESENTS ONE DOLLAR

EACH CLOCK REPRESENTS FOUR HOURS

sists. We have already seen in Table 39 that in each separate occupation the male youth earned more than the female. The same holds true when we consider the data from the viewpoint of race, age, or grade completed.

Marital Status

The difference in the median weekly wages of the married and single male youth doubtless reflects a difference in age as well as marital status. The married males not only received the highest median wage of \$17.06, but also worked the longest hours (49.2). Since the average married male was found to have a wife and one child to support, what this means is that 50 per cent of such families have to manage on less than \$17.06 per week. The obvious inadequacy of this weekly income undoubtedly helps to explain why such a large proportion of married youth were living with their parents or relatives.

Age

In any consideration of the median wages earned by youth of various ages, it should be remembered that the older youth, in larger proportions, are in positions requiring more training, such as the professional and highly technical jobs. Thus, what may appear on the surface as exclusively an age difference will also be a difference in training received. It should also be borne in mind that larger proportions of youth in the younger age groups have part-time jobs. As indicated by Table 42, both these factors tend to depress the average earnings of the 16-, 17-, and 18-year-old youth, and to boost the earnings of those between the ages of 21 and 24.

TABLE 42—MEDIAN WEEKLY WAGES OF EMPLOYED WHITE YOUTH ACCORDING TO PRESENT AGE

Age	Median weekly wage	Number
16.....	\$7.37	133
17-18.....	10.47	751
19-20.....	13.26	1,266
21-22.....	15.91	1,286
23-24.....	17.85	1,108

Locality of Residence

About the only significant difference in the weekly wages received by youth working in various areas was found to exist between the farm and nonfarm groups. Young people employed in cities, towns, and villages were all found to have received about the same median weekly wage, although the workers in villages and towns put in longer hours.

The low cash income of farm youth (\$8.44) is partly explained by the fact that a relatively large proportion of farm laborers were Negroes whose average wage was considerably less than that of the white youth. It is also explained by the fact that many agricultural workers were receiving supplementary compensation in the form of board and room.

TABLE 43—MEDIAN WEEKLY WAGES AND HOURS OF ALL EMPLOYED YOUTH BY LOCALITY OF RESIDENCE

Locality of residence	Median weekly wages	Median weekly hours
City.....	\$13.82	40.4
Town.....	13.51	42.7
Village.....	13.28	44.9
Farm.....	8.44	53.9
Total.....	\$12.46	43.4
Number of youth.....	6,063	6,621 *

* Included are youth reporting hours but no income; also included in this table are 512 employed students.

Race

Although we can assume, from data already presented, that the factor of race will loom large in determining the wages a youth will receive, the potency of this racial factor cannot be fully appreciated until the data of Table 44 are closely ex-

TABLE 44—DISTRIBUTION OF EMPLOYED YOUTH ACCORDING TO WEEKLY WAGES RECEIVED* (By race and sex)

Weekly wage	Percentage in each group				
	All youth	White youth	Negro youth	Male youth	Female youth
Less than \$5.....	13.9	11.2	25.6	12.2	16.9
\$5 to \$10.....	22.4	18.2	40.9	22.1	23.1
\$10 to \$15.....	22.9	23.8	18.8	21.9	24.8
\$15 to \$20.....	21.2	23.7	10.0	20.8	21.7
\$20 to \$25.....	10.9	12.6	3.3	12.0	8.7
\$25 to \$30.....	4.9	5.8	1.0	6.0	2.9
\$30 to \$40.....	2.8	3.4	0.3	3.5	1.6
\$40 or more.....	1.0	1.3	0.1	1.5	0.3
Total.....	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0
Number of youth.....	5,503	4,474	1,029	3,526	1,977

* While examining this table for the differences in the proportions of youth in the race and sex groups who received specified wages, it will be worth noting that three out of every five (59.2 per cent) of *all* the employed youth were earning less than \$15 a week.

amined. From it we see that, while *two-thirds* (66.5 per cent) of the Negro workers were paid less than \$10 a week, less than *one-third* (29.4 per cent) of the white workers were in the same wage brackets.

Presented in another way, and considering the median wages received instead of the percentages of the race and sex groups who earned specified wages, we note in Table 45 that the median weekly wage for the white workers was almost twice as high as that paid to Negroes (\$14.33 as against \$7.98).

TABLE 45—MEDIAN WEEKLY WAGES AND HOURS OF
OUT-OF-SCHOOL EMPLOYED YOUTH
(By race and sex)

Classification of youth	Median weekly wage	Median weekly hours	Number of youth
White.....	\$14.33 ^a	42.4	4,474
Negro.....	7.98 ^b	48.3	1,029
Male white.....	15.17	44.4	2,826
Male Negro.....	8.71	49.2	700
Female white.....	13.20	41.1	1,648
Female Negro.....	6.35	44.1	329

^a The mean weekly wage for this group is \$15.11.

^b The mean weekly wage for this group is \$9.08.

Moreover, the median number of hours worked by the Negro youth (48.3) was found to be about six more than the median hours worked by the white youth (42.4). Thus, for both sexes, race appears to be an extremely important factor in determining the number of hours youth work and the amount of wages they receive.

School Grade Completed

A far more significant factor in determining the wages youth will receive than any so far considered is the matter of grade attainment. From time to time, we have pointed to findings that seem to uncover social and economic forces that lead to social stratification. Among other things, we pointed to the fact that youth whose fathers worked in the low income occupations were likely to receive considerably less schooling than youth whose fathers earned larger incomes from jobs in the higher occupational fields.

We are now in a position to examine another segment of what has previously been referred to as something that looks suspiciously like a vicious circle of economic determinism. We will submit a sufficiently varied array of data to remove any reasonable doubt as to the extent to which grade attainment affects the wages young people earn and the economic strata with which they are likely, as a consequence, to become identified.

Table 46 presents the relation of wages to grade completed from the standpoint of median weekly wages and median weekly hours. In the first column, one sees a progressive increase in the earnings of youth as they attained the higher school levels. The only break in this trend occurs with the eleventh-grade graduate group. This is adequately explained by the fact that the great majority of eleventh-grade graduates lived in rural areas, so that what appears to be a grade difference is actually a difference in area.

TABLE 46—MEDIAN WEEKLY WAGES AND HOURS OF OUT-OF-SCHOOL EMPLOYED YOUTH BY GRADE COMPLETED

School grade completed	Median weekly wage	Median weekly hours	Number of youth
Less than 6th grade.....	\$7.84	50.5	431
6th grade.....	8.75	44.9	349
7th grade.....	9.27	48.7	708
8th grade.....	10.89	42.3	586
9th grade.....	13.19	45.0	485
10th or 11th grade not graduate.....	14.51	42.4	788
11th grade graduate.....	12.72	50.3	508
12th grade graduate.....	15.38	42.5	1,026
1 year beyond high school graduation.....	15.71	42.0	198
2 or three years beyond graduation.....	19.74	42.3	267
4 or more years beyond graduation.....	22.23	41.5	233
All youth.....	\$12.96	42.8	5,579

With the previously mentioned exception of the eleventh-grade graduates, who are mostly farm, village, and town youth, one sees a tendency for the number of working hours to decrease as the educational level of the youth rises from the lower to the higher grades. In short, it seems quite clear that the more schooling youth receive, the more money they earn and the fewer hours they work to earn it.

Table 47 takes up this relationship between grade attainment and wages received from the standpoint of sex. For both sex groups, an identically progressive trend is clearly indicated.

So far as these data are concerned, it is reasonably safe to assume that a young person who has had the advantage of a high school education will earn 50 per cent more than the youth who chooses, or who is forced, to leave school before he has finished the eighth grade. For both sexes, the youth who had completed the higher grades had a definite advantage.

To analyze these data further would be to elaborate on the obvious. However imperfect and unadapted to modern needs some of our educational programs may be, one need have no qualms about assuming that formal school education, for the

great majority of youth who have the ability and the opportunity to take advantage of it, yields worthwhile returns. This is not to say, of course, that the median weekly wage of \$16.22 earned by the young men who graduated from high school is an especially high return on the money and time and energy that went into their four high school years. It is to say, however, that even the less fortunate half of these high school graduates, who earned less than \$16.25 a week, were considerably better off than the 50 per cent of those who did not complete the eighth grade and who earned less than \$10.25 a week.

TABLE 47—MEDIAN WEEKLY WAGES OF EMPLOYED MALE AND FEMALE OUT-OF-SCHOOL YOUTH ACCORDING TO GRADE COMPLETED

School grade completed	Median weekly wage		
	Male	Female	Total
Less than 6th grade.....	\$8.44	\$4.94	\$7.84
6th grade.....	9.26	6.52	8.75
7th grade.....	10.18	7.09	9.27
8th grade.....	11.83	9.01	10.89
9th grade.....	14.26	11.03	13.19
10th or 11th grade not graduate.....	16.34	11.39	14.51
11th or 12th grade graduate.....	16.22	12.74	14.46
1 year beyond high school graduation.....	17.59	14.36	15.71
2 or 3 years beyond graduation.....	21.78	18.50	19.74
4 or more years beyond graduation.....	24.64	21.30	22.23
All grades.....	\$13.54	\$12.04	\$12.96
Number of youth.....	3,584	1,992	5,576

Even though it can be said that the grade level young people attain in school will usually have a desirable effect upon their earnings when they start to work, an exception to this general rule should be made, however, for the Negro youth. Although it is true that only 32 per cent of the Negro youth (see Table 14, page 58) went beyond the eighth grade in school, large numbers of those who went on to high school or college are finding it impossible to invade the more lucrative occupational fields. In all probability, this partially explains why 39.2 per cent of the Negro youth stated that they had found the education they had received of little or no economic assistance to them.

One Negro stated his case rather forcefully in the following verbatim quotation:

After graduating from the _____ school for Negroes, I could not be placed. I was compelled to go to another state. I taught for \$60 per month for one year. It came to me that I could return to my home and do domestic work for a clear \$9.00 per week and not have board and rent to pay. I decided to do this and still think I did the right thing.

Even more forceful is the following comment made by a 19-year-old Negro high school graduate who was found to be employed as a shoe salesman for \$10 a week.

Schools of the present day are all wrong—or maybe I am all wrong. But, if I am, hundreds of Negroes, and people of other races for that matter, are all wrong, too. I can't go to college because I haven't the necessary funds. My brother went, yet what is he doing with his languages, sciences, etc.? He and many of his friends are Summa Cum Laude A.B.'s—but can get no work. They are less happy than I am. Why permit a man to be educated when a country cannot offer him a job paying sufficient to allow him to live in the decent manner his very education has taught him to desire?

The Relation of Schooling to the Youth's Occupational Field

In attempting to measure the effect of grade attainment upon earnings, it should be understood how this factor operates. It has its chief effect in its tendency to place the better educated youth in the more lucrative occupational fields. Many unskilled and semi-skilled laborers with a high school or college education are earning precisely the same wage as those who had dropped out of school below the sixth grade. Employers usually pay on the basis of the job done, and not on the basis of the educational background of the worker. But, although young people doing the same kind of work will often be paid the same wage, regardless of the difference in the amount of schooling they have had, very few youth with limited grade attainment find employment in the more lucrative occupational fields.

How grade attainment affects the occupational field in which a young person will find himself is illustrated by Table 48.

TABLE 48—PRESENT OCCUPATION OF ELEMENTARY, HIGH SCHOOL, AND COLLEGE GRADUATES

Present occupation	Percentage of graduates of		
	Elementary school	High school	College
Professional-technical.....	1.0	4.1	58.9
Proprietary-managerial.....	1.3	3.4	9.8
Office-sales.....	7.9	46.1	22.9
Skilled.....	4.9	2.9	2.2
Semi-skilled.....	30.3	22.4	3.2
Unskilled.....	31.6	8.9	1.1
Domestic-personal.....	15.2	9.3	1.1
Other.....	7.8	2.9	0.8
Total.....	100.0	100.0	100.0

Generally speaking, elementary school graduates (77.1 per cent of them) were in the semi-skilled, unskilled, and domestic-personal fields, while the college

graduates (81.8 per cent) were chiefly found in professional-technical or office-sales categories.

Summary of Factors Affecting Wages Youth Receive

In the foregoing sections, we have analyzed the various factors which influence the median weekly wages that young people receive. Without regard to ranking, the seven that were found to affect a young person's income in one way or another are listed below:

- Sex
- Race
- Age
- Hours worked
- Locality of residence
- School grade completed
- Youth's occupational field

Over the first three of these factors, the youth, as an individual, can exert no control whatever. By no exercise of will can he change his race, his sex, or his age. Over the last four, there is a possibility that he can exert sufficient control to better his general condition. By the exercise of will and the aggressive application of his native ability, he might, for example, find a full-time instead of a part-time job. If he is rarely endowed with both determination and talent, he may *make* his educational opportunities and attain a higher grade level. He can, moreover, move to a different locality, and in some instances he can shift to a more lucrative occupational field. In so far as the total effect of the factors above can be said to influence a young person's income, it is clear therefore that he is partly the master of his economic fate.

No effort to measure the relative strength of these factors will be made, for the reason that the result of such an effort would be open to serious question. For example, it would appear on the surface that the most potent single factor in determining the wages a young worker will receive is that of the occupational field in which he works. One doesn't have to scratch very far beneath this surface, however, to discover that the occupational field in which a youth finds himself is usually related to the amount of schooling he has received. This amount of schooling has, in turn, often been the direct result of the income level of his father. Thus the occupational field in which the youth works is quite as logically the *ultimate result* of the economic status of his parental home as it is the *cause* of his relatively high wages.

The higher income fathers, with their smaller families, provide their children with relatively adequate schooling, which tends eventually to place them in the more highly paid jobs. The lower income fathers, with their larger families, provide

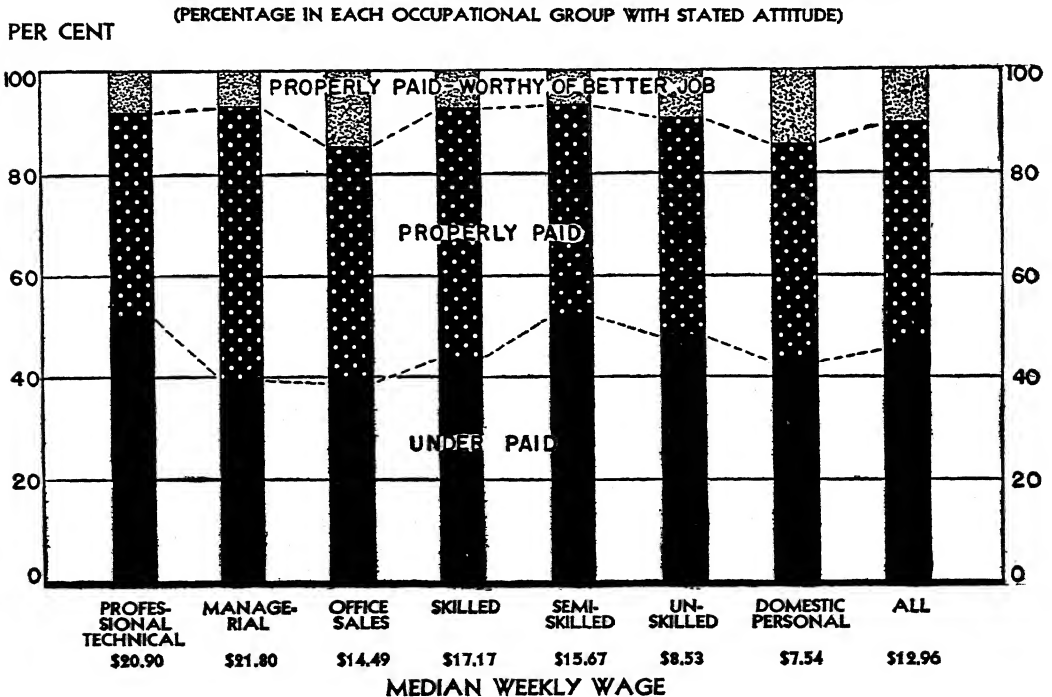
their children with less schooling which, in turn, tends to route them into the more poorly paid jobs. Thus the observation, "For whosoever hath, to him shall be given, . . . but whosoever hath not, from him shall be taken away," still retains, in our modern life, much of its literal meaning.

YOUTH EVALUATE THEIR JOBS

How Youth Feel about Their Wages

In this section, we will discuss the matter of how employed youth feel about their jobs. We soon discover that large numbers of youth are dissatisfied with the work they are doing. It is impossible to ascertain exactly how much of their dissatis-

FIGURE 10
ATTITUDE OF EMPLOYED YOUTH TOWARD WAGES RECEIVED



faction is traceable to a natural urge to work in more socially and economically desirable occupations, and how much is due to serious vocational maladjustment. At least some light on the cause of this discontent can be found in the answers young people made to this question: Do you feel that you are paid what you are worth?

Considering the total number of 5,721 employed young people who answered this question, it will be seen from a glance at Figure 10 that almost half (45.6 per

cent) considered themselves either slightly or greatly underpaid. There seems to be no close relationship between the amount of wages youth receive and how they react to them. For example, the highest degree of discontent was found among the professional-technical and semi-skilled workers, although the median weekly wages the youth in these groups received were considerably higher than the median wages paid to the unskilled and domestic-personal groups. On the other hand, the highest degree of satisfaction was found among the office and sales workers, less than four out of every ten (39.2 per cent) of whom felt that they were being underpaid.

Even more significant, perhaps, than this degree of dissatisfaction among the workers in the various occupations is the 53 per cent who consider themselves *properly* paid. Of this 53 per cent, the great majority (42.8 per cent) felt that they were being paid what they were worth, while only 10.2 per cent felt that, while they were being paid what their job was worth, they were worthy of a better one. If the total number of employed youth who considered themselves underpaid is added to those who believed they were worthy of a better job, the proportion of those who could be said to be dissatisfied with their wages amounts to 56 per cent of the group.

A more detailed analysis of this matter of satisfaction or dissatisfaction with wages is provided in the brief table that follows. In this table we are considering only male workers, and we have selected only a few specific occupational groups. Our purpose is to see if there is any relationship between the attitudes of workers toward the wages they received and the wages they actually earned. Youth engaged in various

TABLE 49—EXTENT TO WHICH EMPLOYED MALE YOUTH IN SPECIFIC OCCUPATIONS CONSIDERED THEMSELVES UNDERPAID

Occupational group	Percentage who felt underpaid	Median weekly wage	Number of youth
Textile operatives.....	70.8	\$20.35	212
Bookkeepers.....	42.4	18.61	33
Inside salespersons.....	41.7	13.74	338
Clerks.....	41.1	18.37	163
Truck drivers.....	38.8	16.74	121
Clothing operatives.....	38.5	13.39	39
All male employed.....	43.9	\$13.60	4,344
White male employed.....	43.5	\$15.17	3,374

occupations are arranged according to the degree of their dissatisfaction with the wages they received. At the top of the list are the textile workers, 70.8 per cent of whom considered themselves underpaid. It will also be seen that this group received

the *highest* median weekly wage. At the bottom of the list are the clothing operatives. This group received the *lowest* median weekly wage.

The implications of Table 49 are probably not of sufficient general interest to justify the exhaustive interpretation that might be given them. The least that can be said is that a feeling of dissatisfaction with wages, like subtler forms of social unrest, does not always spring from a recognition of realities. In this case the greatest discontent was found among workers who, in terms of actual earnings, appear to have had the least reason for being dissatisfied. The community in which the great majority of these young textile operatives were employed was, during a substantial part of the field work period, in the grip of labor strife.

Our knowledge of certain local situations prompts us to suspect that the attitudes of young people, especially young men, are as profoundly affected by local conditions as are wages and other "practical" things. It is altogether reasonable to assume that many youth, like many adults, never become acquainted with the deficiencies of their lot until these deficiencies have been pointed out to them. A plausible explanation of the relatively great dissatisfaction among the male textile workers is probably to be found in the fact that they had been told by labor organizers that their wages were too low. The factor that was present in this situation was the factor of class consciousness, and if these data suggest nothing else, they suggest its power to color, if not fix, a pattern of thought.

TABLE 50—EXTENT TO WHICH FEMALE YOUTH IN SPECIFIC OCCUPATIONS CONSIDERED THEMSELVES UNDERPAID

Occupational field	Percentage who felt underpaid	Median weekly wage	Number of youth
Clothing operatives.....	60.5	\$10.77	109
Teachers.....	60.0	21.46	150
Textile operatives.....	57.5	16.17	240
Waitresses.....	46.0	9.06	113
Inside salespersons.....	41.5	9.17	260
Clerks.....	39.7	16.88	78
Secretaries.....	38.8	15.46	103
Stenographers.....	32.7	16.74	153
Beauticians.....	27.3	12.88	44
Bookkeepers.....	25.4	14.63	59
All employed female youth....	44.2	\$12.02	2,202
White female youth.....	43.5	\$13.20	1,755

An analysis of the responses that young women workers made to this question tells a somewhat different story. Among other things, they reflect the kind of realism that will be revealed later in our discussion of the types of jobs they prefer. Just as

there seems to be substantially less wishful thinking in their attitude toward the kind of work they want to do, there also seems to be more consistency in their evaluation of the wages they received.

First of all, it will be seen that, for the total group, almost the same percentage of the male and female workers considered themselves underpaid. In fact, for the white female employed group the proportion who felt they were being paid less than they were worth is exactly the same as it was for the white males—43.5 per cent.

At this point, however, the similarity between the male and female responses ends. The greatest degree of dissatisfaction was found among the clothing operatives. More than six out of ten of these young women considered themselves underpaid. Their median weekly wage was \$10.77—substantially below the average for all employed females. The group which was next to the least satisfied with their wages was the 150 school teachers. Although their median weekly wage is the highest in the list, it is only \$1.11 more than the median wage of the male textile workers. The obvious basis for complaint among the clothing operatives is their inadequate wage. The quite justifiable grounds for complaint among the teachers is the fact that the salaries they receive too often fail to compensate them for the time and money that went into their professional training.

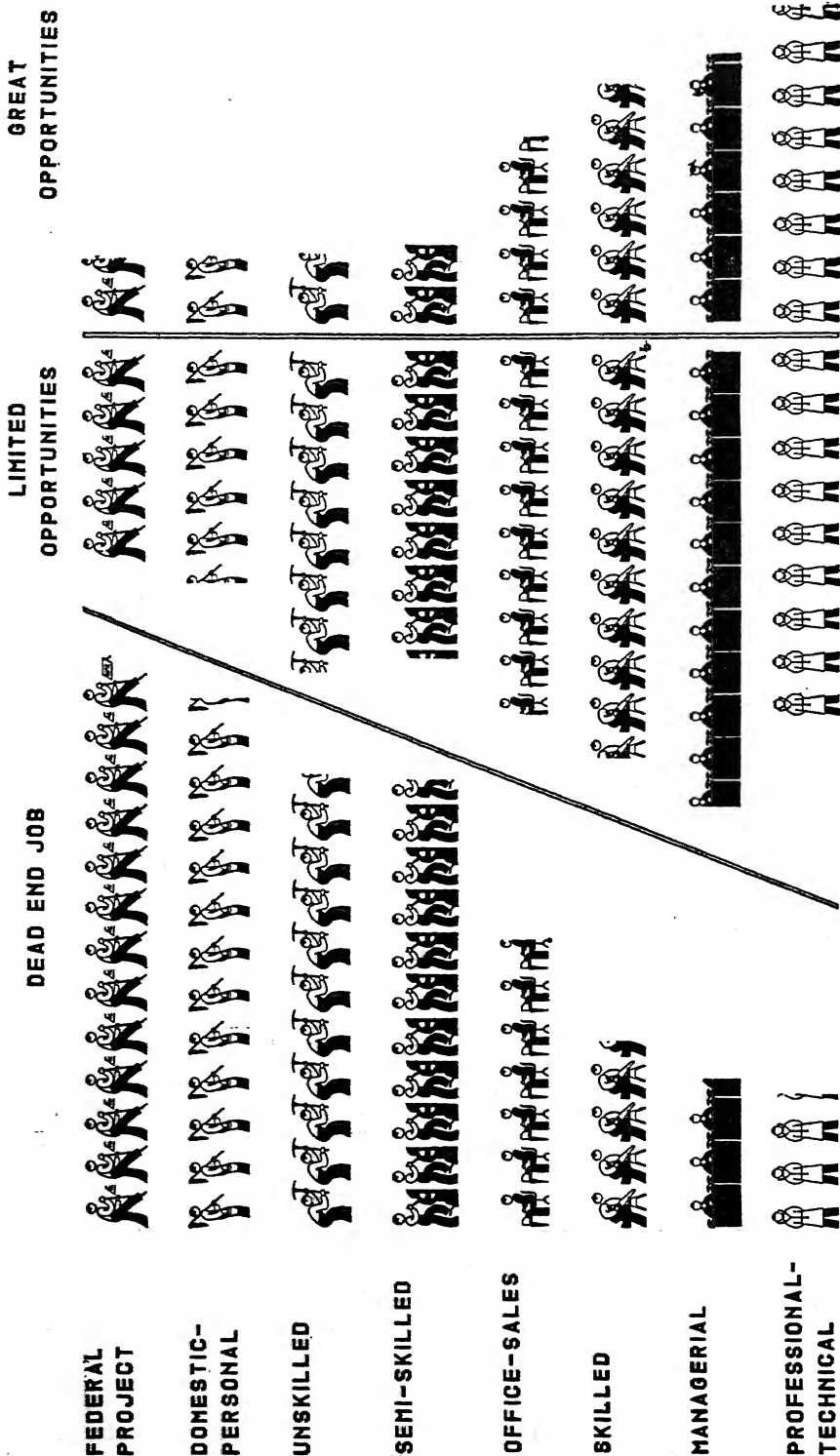
Do Jobs Offer Opportunities for Advancement?

In addition to discovering the extent to which employed youth were satisfied with the wages they were paid, an effort was also made to find out what they felt about the opportunities their jobs offered for future advancement.

TABLE 51—EXTENT TO WHICH EMPLOYED YOUTH REGARDED THEMSELVES AS EMPLOYED ON DEAD-END JOBS

School grade completed	Percentage stating dead-end job	Median weekly wages
Less than 6th grade.....	53.2	\$7.84
6th grade.....	50.0	8.75
7th grade.....	51.5	9.27
8th grade.....	46.5	10.89
9th grade.....	45.0	13.19
10th or 11th grade not graduate.....	44.6	14.51
11th grade graduate.....	35.4	12.72
12th grade graduate.....	44.1	15.38
1 year beyond high school graduation.....	34.1	15.71
2 or 3 years beyond high school graduation.....	23.4	19.74
4 or more years beyond high school graduation...	17.4	22.23
All grades.....	43.2	\$12.96
Number of youth.....	6,126	5,579

DO YOUTH BELIEVE THEIR JOBS OFFER OPPORTUNITIES FOR ADVANCEMENT ?



EACH FIGURE REPRESENTS THE OPINIONS OF 5 % OF EACH GROUP

Among the possible responses an employed youth might make to this question was that his present occupation held out no promise of anything better. So far as he was concerned, it was, in fact, a dead-end job.

Table 51 reveals the extent to which youth who had left school at various grade levels felt that the work they were doing offered no possibilities for advancement.

The grade level a young person attains in school has already been recognized as an influential factor in determining the occupational field in which he will eventually find himself. This same educational factor appears to be closely related to the way youth feel about their jobs. Over half the employed youth who had left school at the completion of the sixth grade or less considered themselves on dead-end jobs. Less than a fifth (17.4 per cent) of the college graduates had the same attitude.

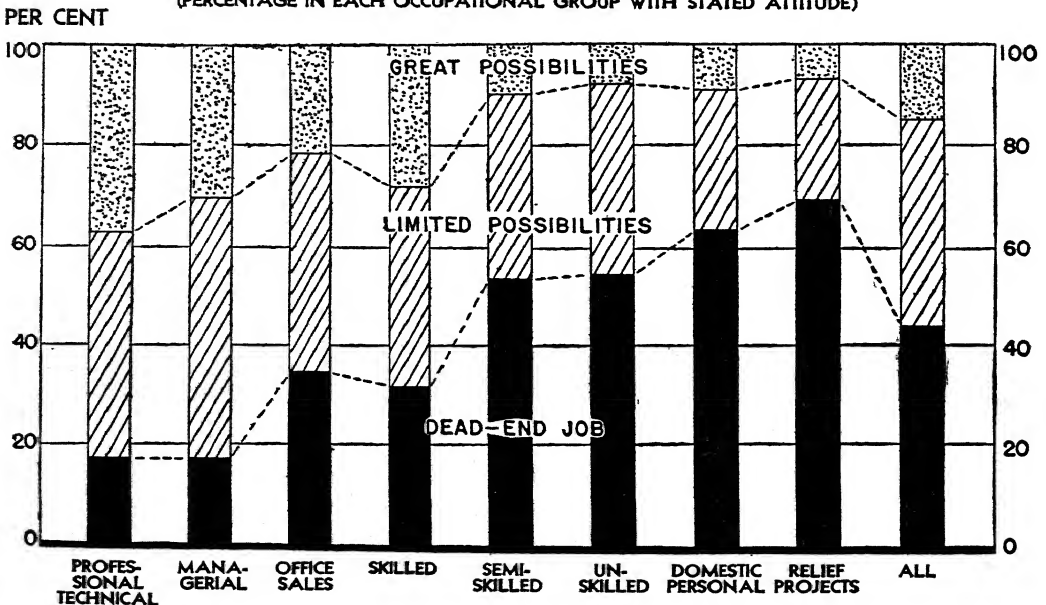
As grade attainment is raised from the lower to the higher levels, the consciousness of being on a job that may lead to something better becomes progressively more general. Even so, almost half (43.2 per cent) the total number of employed youth answering the question felt that they were on a sort of vocational merry-go-round.

Even greater differences are uncovered when this attitude is considered from the point of view of the vocational field in which the youth works. Figure 11 reflects the opinions of the youth in various occupational groups concerning the promotional possibilities of the jobs at which they were employed.

FIGURE 11

ATTITUDE OF EMPLOYED YOUTH TOWARD POSSIBILITIES OF PRESENT JOB

(PERCENTAGE IN EACH OCCUPATIONAL GROUP WITH STATED ATTITUDE)



More than half of the 5,828 employed youth were found to be working on semi-skilled, unskilled, and domestic-personal jobs. And for *each* of these groups, more than half the young people considered the jobs on which they were employed as "dead ends" leading, vocationally, to nowhere. If the youth who regarded themselves as working on dead-end jobs are added to those who believed that their jobs offered but limited opportunities, we find that 85 per cent of each of these groups considered their present employment as offering little or no hope for future advancement.

The fact that more than half the youth in the lower income occupations considered themselves on dead-end jobs will hardly surprise anyone. After all, when a ditch is dug, it is dug, and about the only "advancement" possible is to get another job. What is surprising, however, is that *eight* out of every hundred youth doing unskilled work considered their jobs as offering "great opportunities," while *sixteen* out of every hundred youth working in professional and technical fields expressed the feeling that their positions offered no opportunities whatever.

The Jobs Youth Want and the Jobs They Get

Mention was made, in a previous section, of the disparity between the kind of work the employed youth were doing and the vocations for which they said they wanted vocational training. Among other things disclosed was the fact that of all young people out of school 36.4 per cent said they would take free professional-technical training if it were provided them, while only 3.8 per cent were actually discovered on such jobs.

One reason for presenting data on the types of vocational training desired was to suggest the extent to which employed youth seemed to be satisfied, or dissatisfied, with the kind of work they were doing. Other more convincing evidence on how well-adjusted and contented employed young people are with their present work is found in a comparison between the kinds of jobs they were actually doing, and the kinds they said they would prefer if opportunities for choice presented themselves.

Each youth was asked this question: Regardless of available opportunities, what kind of work would you most like to do? When the responses of *all* the youth are considered, more than four out of every ten (43.1 per cent) expressed a desire to work in one of the professional-technical occupations, and two out of ten (20.8 per cent) wanted work in the office and sales field. This means that almost two-thirds of all youth, including the students, wanted jobs in these two limited fields.

In view of the fact that somewhat less than half the total youth interviewed were found to be employed on part-time or full-time jobs, a more appropriate group to consider, in this effort to measure vocational adjustment, is the employed group alone. By considering this group only, we can compare the kind of work youth said they wanted with the kind of work they were actually doing.

As with the total group, the employed youth showed a decided preference for professional-technical work. In fact, more than twice as many expressed a preference for work in this general field as in any other. Almost 40 per cent (38.3) wanted professional-technical jobs, while the next largest proportion (18.5 per cent) wanted jobs in the general field of office and sales.

TABLE 52—ACTUAL AND PREFERRED OCCUPATIONS OF EMPLOYED YOUTH

Occupational field	Percentage of youth		Number of youth	
	Desiring specific field	Employed in specific field	Desiring specific field	Employed in specific field
Professional-technical.....	38.3	7.5	1,973	388
Managerial.....	9.1	4.1	467	209
Office-sales.....	18.5	27.1	951	1,391
Skilled.....	18.2	4.3	936	223
Semi-skilled.....	6.3	24.9	325	1,280
Unskilled.....	2.5	14.6	127	752
Domestic-personal.....	6.9	11.4	354	588
Relief project.....	0.2	5.9	10	302
Other.....	—	0.2	—	10
Youth reporting.....	100.0	100.0	5,143	5,143

The real significance of these percentages of employed youth who prefer specific occupational fields comes to light only when they are considered in relation to the kinds of jobs the young people who expressed these preferences were actually doing. One cannot be too sure, of course, whether the disparity between the kind of work they said they wanted and the kind of work they were doing is a reflection on the degree of their vocational maladjustment, or whether it is simply an indication of what might be defined as "job dissatisfaction." The probabilities are that the disparities revealed in Table 52 reflect a measure of both.

More than five times as large a proportion of the employed subjects expressed a desire to do professional-technical work as were found to be employed in this field. More than four times as many youth wanted jobs in some kind of skilled labor as were found to be so employed. On the other hand, almost four times as large a number were found to be working in the semi-skilled occupations as preferred to be so employed.

Another way of looking at this combination of vocational maladjustment and job dissatisfaction is to approach it from the standpoint of specific jobs rather than general occupational fields.

In the left-hand column of Table 53 are listed the ten jobs, or should we say "positions," that the employed *male* youth most preferred. The next column to the

THE JOBS YOUTH WANT AND THE JOBS THEY GET

WHAT THEY WANT

WHAT THEY GET

PROFESSIONAL
OR TECHNICAL



MANAGERIAL



OFFICE
OR SALES



SKILLED



SEMI-SKILLED



UNSKILLED



DOMESTIC
OR PERSONAL



RELIEF
PROJECT



EACH FIGURE REPRESENTS 160 YOUTH

right shows the ten at which they were most often found to be working. None of those appearing in the "preferred" column is to be found in the "actual" column.

For the employed *female* group, a comparison between the jobs preferred and the jobs being done suggests a significantly higher degree of satisfaction. Six of the ten (the underlined) jobs they most preferred are to be found in the ten at which

TABLE 53—THE JOBS YOUTH WANT AND THE JOBS THEY GET

Male youth		Female youth	
Ten occupations most frequently preferred	Ten occupations most frequently followed	Ten occupations most frequently preferred	Ten occupations most frequently followed
Engineer	Farm laborer	Nurse	Housewife
Mechanic	Industrial laborer	Teacher	<u>Family domestic</u>
Farm owner	Inside salesperson	<u>Stenographer</u>	<u>Inside salesperson</u>
Aviator	Unpaid family worker	<u>Housewife</u>	<u>Textile operative</u>
Physician	Textile operative	<u>Secretary</u>	<u>Stenographer</u>
Lawyer	Clerk	Beautician	<u>Teacher</u>
Electrician	Truck driver	<u>Family domestic</u>	Waitress
Teacher	WPA	Artist	<u>Secretary</u>
Musician	Helper	<u>Musician</u>	Clerk
Machinist	CCC	<u>Inside salesperson</u>	Clothing operative

they were most often engaged. These comparisons suggest, among other things, that there is either less vaulting ambition among the young women, or else there is a good deal more realism in their understanding of themselves and the kind of world they are living in.

In so far as the love of one's work is a part of one's enthusiasm for living, it is clear that about all that can be said for this younger generation is that they are a

TABLE 54—PERCENTAGE OF YOUTH WHO PREFERRED THE OCCUPATIONAL FIELD IN WHICH THEY WERE EMPLOYED

Occupational field in which youth were found to be employed	Percentage of youth who preferred this field
Semi-skilled.....	10.7
Unskilled.....	13.6
Office-sales.....	35.5
Domestic-personal.....	36.6
Skilled.....	40.8
Managerial-farm owner.....	44.5
Professional-technical.....	91.2

rather sorry and depressed lot. By what they voluntarily choose to say about themselves, it is evident that they don't like their jobs. This is further suggested by the data shown in Table 54.

With the single exception of those working on professional or technical jobs, more than half the youth in *every* occupational field expressed a preference for some other kind of work. In the semi-skilled group, which incidentally is one of the largest, about one in ten felt that what he was doing was exactly what he wanted.

As a final touch to this picture, we present the almost microscopic measure of job satisfaction discovered among workers in certain occupations. Included in the semi skilled field is the type of work classified as textile operative. Among other things, textile operatives look after looms. It is a part of their business to see that threads don't break and, when they do, to tie the ends together again. Some of these workers are allowed to sit, but usually they are expected to stand. The pace is fast and the noise is seldom less than monotonous.

TABLE 55—EXTENT TO WHICH YOUTH EMPLOYED IN CERTAIN OCCUPATIONS PREFERRED THOSE OCCUPATIONS

Occupation in which youth was engaged	Percentage preferring this occupation	Number preferring this occupation	Percentage preferring other occupation	Number of youth in occupation
Male Youth				
Textile operative.....	1.9	4	98.1	212
Clothing operative.....	2.6	1	97.4	39
Clerk.....	5.5	9	94.5	163
Salesperson.....	6.8	23	93.2	338
Farm laborer.....	10.3	59	89.7	572
Truck driver.....	14.9	18	85.1	121
Bookkeeper.....	15.2	5	84.8	33
Female Youth				
Canning operative ^a	—	—	100.0	53
Waitress.....	1.8	2	98.2	113
Textile operative.....	2.1	5	97.9	240
Clerk.....	3.8	3	96.2	78
Salesperson.....	6.9	18	93.1	260
Clothing operative.....	9.1	10	90.9	110
Bookkeeper.....	15.3	9	84.7	59
Stenographer.....	18.3	28	81.7	153
Family domestic.....	26.3	71	73.7	270
Secretary.....	44.7	46	55.3	103
Teacher.....	65.3	98	34.7	150
Beautician.....	77.3	34	22.7	44

^a Both sexes: 33 women and 20 men.

A glance at the top of the second column of Table 55 will reveal that, of the 212 male textile operatives who were reached while coming from, going to, or trying to forget their looms, only *four* told the interviewer that the job of being a textile operative was exactly what they wanted. The other 208, or 98.1 per cent, wished they were doing something else. The young women who were so employed were found to be somewhat more contented! Of the 240, *five* were certain that they were doing exactly what they wanted to do. The other 235 were not so sure.

Among the canning operatives, not one of the 53 youth of either sex considered such work as the kind he or she wanted to do which, conceivably, is something to the credit of the group, considering the wages they generally received, the insecurity of their jobs, and the conditions under which they had to work. Of the 113 waitresses, two were quite happy about it, while the other 111 wished themselves vocationally elsewhere.

Four hundred and thirty-six youthful employees of a certain large corporation were questioned as to the kind of work they most preferred to do. Only *eight* expressed a preference for the kind of work they were doing.

About the only bright spots in this picture are found in the opinions which teachers and beauticians had about their jobs. Two-thirds (65.3 per cent) of the 150 teachers and over three-fourths (77.3 per cent) of the beauticians were quite sure that the work they were doing was precisely what they wanted.

Why This Discontent?

Exactly what is at the root of all this discontent, we are not in a position to say. Doubtless a good deal of it is the direct result of serious vocational maladjustment. Much of it, however, is probably a reflection of a healthy desire to work in more socially and economically desirable occupations. For better or worse, it has been a part of our national tradition to encourage the idea that there is something essentially superior about working with white collars on. Along with the social stigma associated with various kinds of manual work, there is the even more potent factor of wages. From data already submitted, it is known that the average weekly wage of the youthful unskilled workers was \$8.53, while that of the proprietary and managerial workers was well over twice that much. Thus both reality and tradition contribute something to the general discontent. To decrease it, what is clearly needed, along with the continued trend toward higher wages, is a revived faith in the dignity of working with one's hands.

At the bottom of this general dissatisfaction, there is more, however, than a desire for a more socially acceptable and better paid job. There is often the feeling of being lost in a bewildering world of machines. To this is added the policy of some

individuals and corporations of hiring young people almost exclusively, and releasing them as soon as they have passed a certain age limit. A study of the average age of the employees of some of our large factories and stores would uncover some very significant things. All of this, of course, inevitably leads to a sense of futility and frustration, and encourages a quite understandable "don't care a damn" philosophy.

When a young person is led to suspect that his job will be over as soon as his briskness and zest have begun to wane, or as soon as his employer decides that he can save money by replacing him with another worker at a lower wage, perhaps he will be forgiven if his attitude toward his vocational future is not too cheerful. His education has usually been insufficient to develop anything like vocational versatility, and his actual work experience has often been confined to a few routine, mechanical tasks. Thus he is denied the chance to grow up vocationally and deprived of the hope and optimism that often spring from the assurance that his present job will lead to a better one.

Much has been said in previous sections about the social and economic dangers inherent in any indifference to the general welfare of a younger generation. When one considers this personnel policy of hiring young people and firing them as soon as they have passed beyond a relatively early age limit, one comes to suspect that the "waste of human resources" is more than a popular current phrase. It becomes, in fact, a definitely ugly reality. As a personnel policy, it is as vicious and as socially nearsighted as any waste of natural resources that one can imagine. We become disturbed at wanton destruction of oil and coal. When economists tell us that we waste four barrels of oil for every one we produce and that we fritter away some 9 billion tons of coal for every 7.5 billion that we consume, our sensibilities are outraged and we clamor for restrictive laws—forgetting, the while, that the waste in human resources, though perhaps less tangible, is no less real.

Unpleasant stories are told of operators of coal properties who, in their frantic haste to get their coal from the ground, mine only the richer veins and leave the smaller ones to cave in. This coal, it is said, is forever lost. Somehow this sort of thing reminds us that youth, too, never comes again.

WHEN YOUTH START TO WORK

In view of the current interest in child labor legislation, which is concerned, among other things, with fixing the age at which youth shall be permitted to accept full-time jobs, it is significant that more than half the youth who ever had full-time jobs got them *before* they were 18 years of age. The median age was 17.6 years. Although the numbers are not great, it is pertinent to remark that 35 white youth

(0.5 per cent) and 74 Negroes (5.6 per cent) were found to have left school and started to work on full-time jobs when they were 12 years old or younger.

HOW MANY YOUTH HAVE EVER HAD FULL-TIME JOBS?

A full-time job has previously been defined as gainful employment of at least 30 hours a week worked by youth who had permanently left school. On page 105 we showed that 5,447 youth, or 40.3 per cent of all those interviewed, had worked at full-time jobs the week preceding the interview. In addition to this number, there were 2,576 youth who did not have full-time jobs when interviewed, but who had, at some time previously, worked at such employment. The total of these two groups, 8,023, represents all youth who, at one time or another, had secured some full-time employment since leaving school. It includes almost 60 per cent (59.3) of all the youth interviewed, and 73.7 per cent of the youth out of school. All tables and discussion to follow will be based on this total group of 8,023 youth who had had full-time employment at some time or other.

FACTORS INFLUENCING THE AGE AT WHICH YOUTH START TO WORK

Locality of Residence

The extent to which youth, living in various kinds of localities, got their first full-time jobs at specified ages under 18 is suggested by Table 56.

TABLE 56—PROPORTIONS OF YOUTH, LIVING IN VARIOUS LOCALITIES, WHO GOT THEIR FIRST FULL-TIME JOBS BEFORE THEY WERE 18 YEARS OF AGE

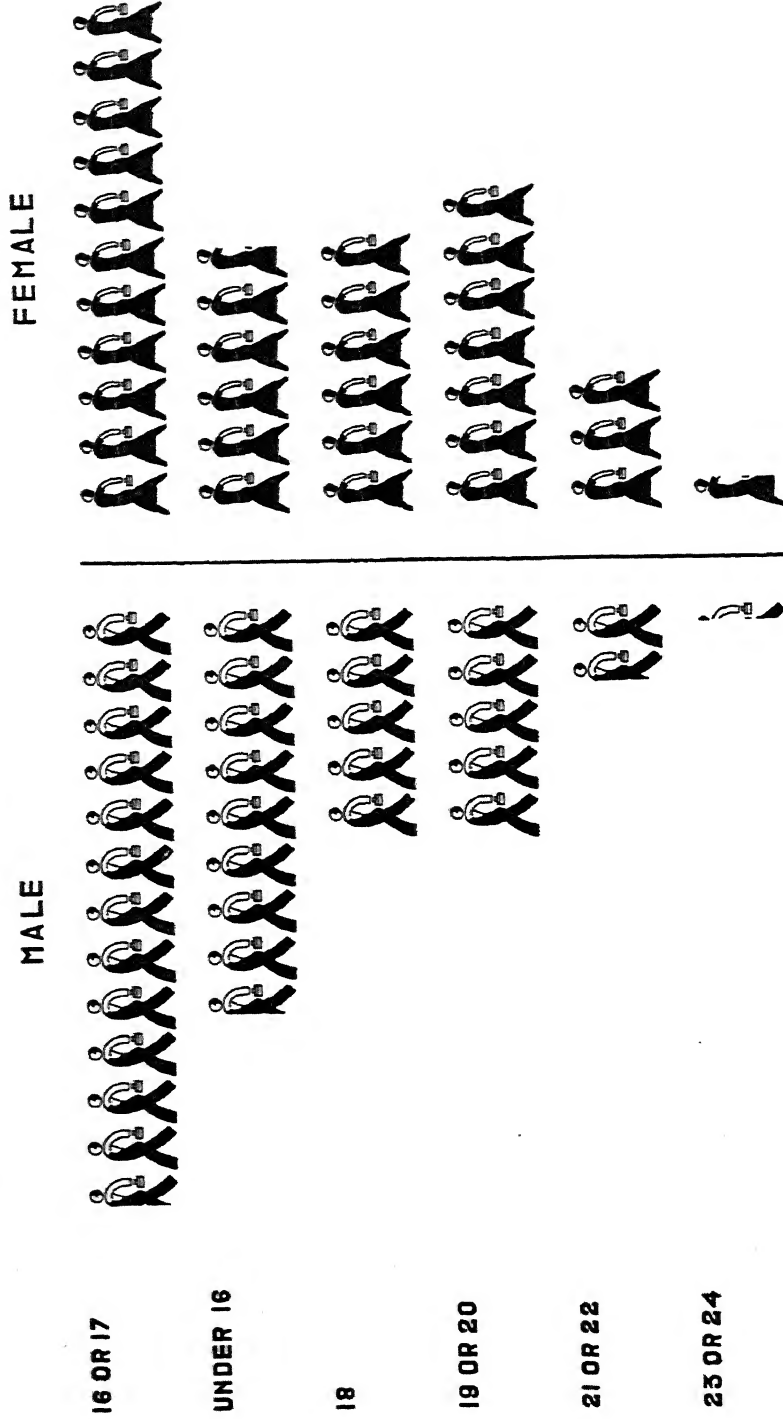
Age at first full-time job	Cumulative percentages			
	Farm	Village	Town	City
12 years and under.....	3.5	1.3	0.3	0.6
15 years and under.....	33.6	18.5	11.9	20.1
17 years and under.....	69.4	53.0	45.4	57.9

The largest proportion of youth who had taken full-time jobs when they were 17 years old or younger was found among the young people living on farms. Almost 70 per cent (69.4) had started to work at these early years. The percentage of youth living in cities who had received full-time employment at the same age levels is also high (57.9).

Relief Status of Family

We have previously discussed the influence that a young person's economic background exerts over the age at which he leaves school. Evidence of the relation

AGE AT WHICH OUT-OF-SCHOOL YOUTH SECURED FIRST FULL-TIME* JOBS



* 30 OR MORE HOURS PER WEEK

EACH FIGURE REPRESENTS 5% OF EACH SEX GROUP WHO HAVE HAD FULL-TIME JOBS

of the economic background of the youth's family to the age when he first went to work on a full-time job is uncovered when one compares the youth from relief and nonrelief families. Over 30 per cent (30.8) of the white youth from relief families went to work before they were 16 years of age. A significantly smaller proportion (17.6 per cent) of the white nonrelief youth got their first full-time jobs at the same ages.

School Grade Completed

In the analysis of our data relating to the extent of unemployment, we found that, of the youth of all ages between 16 and 24, about 60 per cent (61.2) of the available workers had full-time jobs, while about 40 per cent (38.8) did not. We have already shown, in Table 32, on page 97, how clearly the matter of grade attainment is related to the age at which youth start to work. We showed how the majority of youth who left school before they had finished the seventh grade entered the labor market before they had reached the age of 16—while the majority of those who had received twelve years of schooling, and graduated from high school, were over 18 years of age before they had the same experience.

The inescapable conclusion that these facts force upon us is that at least one way of preventing young people below the age of 16 from throwing the weight of their numbers on an already glutted labor market is to extend the period of their schooling. And at least one way of assuring ourselves that we are training all our youth in the not-so-simple business of functioning in a democracy is to do precisely the same thing.

Father's Occupation

In all the data so far analyzed, the occupation of the youth's father has been found to have a profound effect upon both the young person's condition and his opportunities. With respect to the age youth go to work, this factor operates in the usual manner. The median age at which the youth whose fathers were professional-technical workers first went to work on full-time jobs was 19.5 years, as against about 16.5 years for the semi-skilled, unskilled, and farm labor groups. These median ages, arranged in descending order, will be found in the first column of Table 57. The second column deals with the proportions of youth who had left school and gone to work at full-time jobs at some time before they were 16 years of age.

More than eight times as large a proportion of young people whose fathers were in the unskilled labor group were found to have left school and gone to work on full-time jobs before they were 16 years old as was the case with the youth whose fathers were professional or technical workers. The difference is suggested by the percentages of the two occupational extremes—45.3 and 4.4. Even more significant than these two extremes, however, is the obvious trend. As the father's occupation descends

to the lower income levels, the proportion of youth going to work at unusually early ages progressively increases.

TABLE 57—MEDIAN AGES AT FIRST FULL-TIME JOBS AND PERCENTAGES STARTING TO WORK BEFORE 16 YEARS OF AGE
(Youth by father's occupation)

Father's occupation	Median age of youth at first full-time job	Percentage of youth getting jobs before 16 years of age
Professional-technical.....	19.5	4.4
Office.....	18.7	5.8
Managerial.....	18.4	10.0
Sales.....	18.3	8.5
Domestic-personal.....	17.7	19.7
Skilled.....	17.6	18.4
Farm owner-tenant.....	17.2	28.1
Semi-skilled.....	16.7	24.6
Unskilled.....	16.7	36.5
Farm laborer.....	16.3	45.3
All youth.....	17.5	21.9

IMPLICATIONS FOR CHILD LABOR LEGISLATION

In view of the current interest in child labor legislation, these data relating to the age at which youth start to work acquire additional significance. Almost three out of every four (73.7 per cent) of the youth who had left school were found to have had some full-time job before they had reached the age of 25. Of these youth, who, at some time, had had full-time jobs, a little more than one-fifth (21.9 per cent) secured them before they were 16 years of age.

Residence of Child Laborers

It is not only desirable to have some idea as to the *number* of youth who might be affected by child labor legislation, but it is also important to have some basis for knowing *where* these young people are. It was found that the 1,751 youth who got their first full-time jobs before they were 16 were distributed as follows:

TABLE 58—RESIDENCE OF YOUTH WHO GOT THEIR FIRST FULL-TIME JOBS BEFORE THEY WERE 16 YEARS OLD

Locality of residence	Percentage in each locality	Number of youth
Farm.....	34.8	609
Village.....	18.4	322
Town.....	6.3	110
City.....	40.5	710
All youth.....	100.0	1,751

Assuming that substantial numbers of these young employees living in villages and towns had worked, or were working, on farms near their homes, it is possible that more than the 34.8 per cent of the total group are, or were, agricultural workers. Yet, even after making such allowances, our findings suggest that substantially more than half the number of youth who had secured full-time jobs before reaching the age of 16 were employed in non-agricultural pursuits.

Child Labor Is Still with Us

In view of the advances that have been made in recent years toward the prohibition of child labor, there is a danger of assuming that this evil no longer exists. We should not delude ourselves. Child labor is still with us.

It will be remembered that the bulk of our field work was done in the summer and fall of 1936. By that time, 228 of the 16-year-old youth had left school and secured full-time jobs. Of this group, two out of every five had gone to work when they were 15 years old or younger. Of the 16- to 18-year-old youth who had had some full-time job, 334, or one in every five, had secured such employment at the age of 15 or younger.

The youth just considered had gone to work during and after the days of the NRA. It is gratifying to note that the proportion who went to work before they were 16 is smaller, relatively speaking, in the younger than in the older age groups. All of this indicates that, while the trend is in the right direction, the need for aggressive social action still exists.

Wasted Years: A Study of a County

There are at least two good ways to control child labor and to give our youth the advantages of at least a minimum education. One is to prohibit the gainful employment of children under a certain age. The other is to insist that children stay in school until a certain age has been reached. Thus child labor laws are always closely associated with laws relating to compulsory school attendance, and excessive child labor in any area may quite as likely be the result of the failure of one of these laws to function as the other.

Take the case of a county which, from the standpoint of socio-economic level, is neither the best nor the worst. In this county, 387 of the youth interviewed had left school. Of this out-of-school group, 168, or 43.4 per cent, had left school before they were 16 years old. These youth were almost equally divided between the sexes—85 were male and 83 were female. One hundred and seventeen were white, while 51 were Negroes.

Concerning this group of 168 youth, we have some interesting and significant information. Only 37, or less than one in four, had secured full-time jobs before they

were 16. This means that three out of every four of this group had no jobs, but were, nevertheless, permitted to leave school.

Of these 168 youth, 46 had left school at the age of 13 or younger. Thirty-five of them had managed to find full-time jobs by the time of the interview, after waiting periods of anywhere from less than one month to ten years. The average wait was three years and a half.

What seems clearly needed is a more effective administration of existing laws, as well as the enactment of more farsighted social legislation.

SUMMARY

An analysis of our findings on the age at which youth secured their first full-time jobs forces upon us the conclusion that the relatively early age at which large numbers start to work is as definitely opposed to the best interests of our social and economic system as it is unfortunate for the young people themselves.

As we have seen, more than half the youth who at some time had had full-time jobs had secured them before they were 18 years of age. We have further seen that over a fifth (21.9 per cent) of these youth had worked on some full-time job before they were 16 years old. It was also discovered that by holding young people in schools their entry into the labor market was substantially retarded.

Even a superficial consideration of the data so far presented will suggest how generally related is the amount of schooling a young person receives to the standard of living he later enjoys. There are, of course, noteworthy and dramatic exceptions, but if we are to keep our social thinking on the ground, we will recognize them as the exceptions and not the rule.

The total effect of the data uncovered with respect to the age at which youth start to work has been to support our suspicion that an investment of time and thought and money in the development of purposeful programs for young people will yield gratifying social and economic returns to both the youth who are affected by them and the society that makes them possible. Once in a while a person happens along who is strong enough to *make* his opportunities. But most of us do well if we can take advantage of the opportunities that circumstances provide us.

UNEMPLOYED YOUTH

Inasmuch as the unemployed element of our population promises to continue to be of special interest and concern, it would be profitable to study more closely some of the characteristics of this group. As used in this section, the term "unemployed" will refer to the *totally* unemployed—those youth who had no gainful

employment beyond a possible maximum of four and three-quarter hours the week preceding the interview.

It has already been disclosed in Table 34, on page 106, that almost 30 per cent (29.5) of the young people in the labor market were totally unemployed, and that almost 40 per cent (38.8) did not have full-time jobs.

In the introductory discussion of the nature of our youth sample, we emphasized the point that the Commission's staff is more interested in general implications than local peculiarities. We believe that the data so far analyzed have such implications. We believe this because we know that our sample exhibits, within reasonable limits, the same characteristics as those of the national youth population. (See page 11 and Table 1.)

In view of the procedures followed in reaching the youth of our sample, it is obvious that we have no original contributions to make with respect to the distribution of young people within the social and economic categories that we deliberately controlled. We cannot, for example, throw any additional light on the distribution of white and Negro youth in the United States, because we made a deliberate and persistent effort to reach the same percentages of white and Negro youth as were reflected by the preceding federal census. Exactly the same thing is true with respect to all the other categories, such as farm-nonfarm, male-female, in-school-out-of-school, married or single.

By following federal census data on the distribution of the national youth population within these categories we followed a compass, or a guide, which held us to our course. It will be remembered that with respect to the extent of relief and unemployment we had no compass. All we had were a few rather dim stars in the form of varying estimates. We cannot state, therefore, that our percentage of unemployed is generally representative, as we had no unchallengeable census data to use as a guide. The relief estimates change from month to month, and the extent of unemployment is still anybody's guess.

Our guess on the number of totally unemployed youth in the United States is recorded on page 106. It was 3,000,000. It may be 2,000,000 and it may quite possibly be 4,000,000. In either case, there is an appalling waste, and we suspect that either estimate is quite large enough to justify some aggressively constructive action.

FACTORS AFFECTING UNEMPLOYMENT

In the discussion that follows, the youth considered are the youth in the labor market—the available workers. The majority of these youth (70.5 per cent) are employed on part-time or full-time jobs. The remaining 29.5 per cent are totally unemployed.

Residence

It will be seen that almost twice as large a proportion of city youth was unemployed as farm youth (37.6 per cent as compared with 20 per cent). This low percentage of unemployment in rural areas must be interpreted, however, in the light

TABLE 59—RESIDENCE OF EMPLOYED AND UNEMPLOYED YOUTH

Residence of youth	Percentage of each area		Number of youth	
	Employed	Unemployed	Employed	Unemployed
Farm.....	80.0	20.0	1,586	396
Village.....	74.0	26.0	1,478	519
Town.....	76.3	23.7	746	232
City.....	62.4	37.6	2,457	1,480
Youth in the labor market.....	70.5	29.5	6,267	2,627

of the seasonal activity at the time when the youth were interviewed. The results would probably have shown a far less satisfactory situation for rural youth if the study had been conducted during the winter months.

Sex and Marital Status

Another vital matter that must be considered in any analysis of unemployment is the sex distribution of the unemployed.

TABLE 60—SEX AND MARITAL STATUS OF THE EMPLOYED AND UNEMPLOYED YOUTH

Sex and marital status	Percentage	
	Employed	Unemployed
Male.....	66.1	49.3
Single.....	53.7	45.2
Married.....	12.4	4.1
Female.....	33.9	50.7
Single.....	26.6	40.7
Married.....	7.3	10.0
Total.....	100.0	100.0
Number of youth.....	6,272	2,629

Table 60 shows that half the *unemployed* workers were girls and young women (50.7 per cent females and 49.3 per cent males). It also reveals that two-thirds of the *employed* youth were young men. And, as a final point, it shows that a little more than one out of every five employed females was married.

Race

The proportions of unemployed youth were practically the same for both the white and Negro groups. Of the available white workers, 29.2 per cent were totally unemployed, compared with 30.9 per cent for the Negroes. A part of this similarity in the extent of unemployment between the two race groups may be explained by the fact that a relatively larger proportion of the Negro youth were agricultural workers, and were thus in a better position to profit by seasonal employment.

Age

As we have indicated elsewhere, 2,629 (29.5 per cent) of the available workers were totally unemployed. Of these 2,629 unemployed youth, 1,357, or more than half, had previously had full-time jobs.

The median age at which these 1,357 youth landed their first full-time jobs was about four months after their 17th birthday. Their median age, at the time when they were interviewed, was exactly 20 years. About all this shows is that not *all* the unemployed youth are those who are just out of school. We have already seen in our discussion of youth in the labor market (Table 34, page 106) that, while unemployment was more general among the lower age groups, more than a fifth of the youth between 21 and 24 years of age were unemployed.

AVAILABLE WORKERS WHO NEVER HAD FULL-TIME JOBS

We have seen in the preceding section that slightly more than half the youth who were unemployed at the time of the interview had previously had full-time jobs. This leaves 1,272, or slightly less than half (48.4 per cent) of the unemployed youth, who *never* had full-time jobs. The length of time these youth had been waiting for work varied from less than three months to more than seven years.

In a previous chapter, we discussed the contribution schools could make toward meeting the social obligation of developing constructive programs for this host of involuntarily idle youth. In perhaps as significant a table as has so far been presented, the following data suggest the relationship between the grade levels at which youth leave school, and the length of time they wait for their first full-time jobs.

It will be understood that the youth considered in Table 61 are those who wanted work but who never had full-time jobs. The time interval is expressed in terms of the median number of years or months that had elapsed between the time when they had left school and the time when they were interviewed. The youth of both sexes who had left school before they had finished the sixth grade had been waiting for full-time jobs for almost six years. *Many of them are still waiting.* Those who left after the completion of the sixth, seventh, or eighth grades had waited almost three

years. There is no reason to doubt that a large proportion of these, too, are still waiting. On the other hand, the youth who had graduated from high school and had gone on to college had waited an average of less than six months.

It would be difficult to present more convincing evidence of the potential value of expanded school programs. Estimates released by the United States Office of Education reveal that more than half the young people in the United States between

TABLE 61—AVERAGE PERIOD OF TIME SINCE UNEMPLOYED YOUTH, WHO NEVER HAD FULL-TIME JOBS, LEFT SCHOOL
(By grade completed)

School grade completed	Median years or months since leaving school		
	Male youth	Female youth	All youth *
Less than 6th grade.....	3.3 years	7.0 years	5.6 years
6th, 7th, 8th grades.....	2.4 years	3.4 years	2.9 years
9th, 10th, 11th grades.....	1.7 years	1.9 years	1.8 years
11th grade graduate and 12th grade graduate.....	5.6 months	1.5 years	1.3 years
College.....	5.3 months	8.3 months	5.9 months
All grades.....	1.6 years	2.1 years	1.9 years
Number of youth.....	603	1,020	1,623

* Included in this group are 351 homemakers desiring jobs.

the ages of 16 and 24 have left school before completing the ninth grade. The youth of our sample who left school at this level and who had never secured full-time employment had already been dawdling through an average of three empty years. These years contribute nothing to the youth himself or to the society of which he is a part. They represent, in fact, a total loss for all concerned.

WHY ARE YOUTH UNEMPLOYED?

That 55 per cent of the unemployed youth should give a lack of available jobs as the chief reason for their unemployment is not surprising. The following comments, besides being refreshingly realistic, suggest the variety of reasons why youth consider themselves unemployed.

"So many say, 'I'd give you a job if I had it,' but there just isn't any."

"People who used to have chauffeurs now drive their own cars."

"I've applied almost everywhere."

"They always want boys older than I am." (A 16-year-old.)

"They won't hire married women."

"There are jobs, but you can't live on \$5 a week; even pants cost \$3 a pair."

Lack of experience and lack of training were frequently cited:

"Every place I go they ask if I'm experienced."

"If you've never had a job, no one wants to take a chance on you."

"For any type of job, you must have experience, even for jobs that any dumb person could do."

"I went to the ——— department store to make application, and after I had filled out the form, the man tore it up before my eyes. I got mad and asked him how he ever thought I was going to get experience if I wasn't given a chance at a job."

"I think if I had a better education, I'd have a better chance of getting a job."

"My education isn't high enough."

"There aren't any jobs for uneducated girls without experience."

Some gave lack of influence:

"Just haven't got the drag."

"Only people with political pull get good jobs."

Others admitted their own laziness or unwillingness to look for work:

"I'd rather take a bad dose of medicine any day than ask for a job."

"I'm too lazy to look for a job. I can have a swell time in the summer."

"Father has a job now. Why should I work?"

"I guess I just don't have the ambition to work."

"I haven't looked for a job. I sleep all morning."

WHAT YOUTH ARE DOING ABOUT THEIR UNEMPLOYMENT

Are They Registered in Employment Agencies?

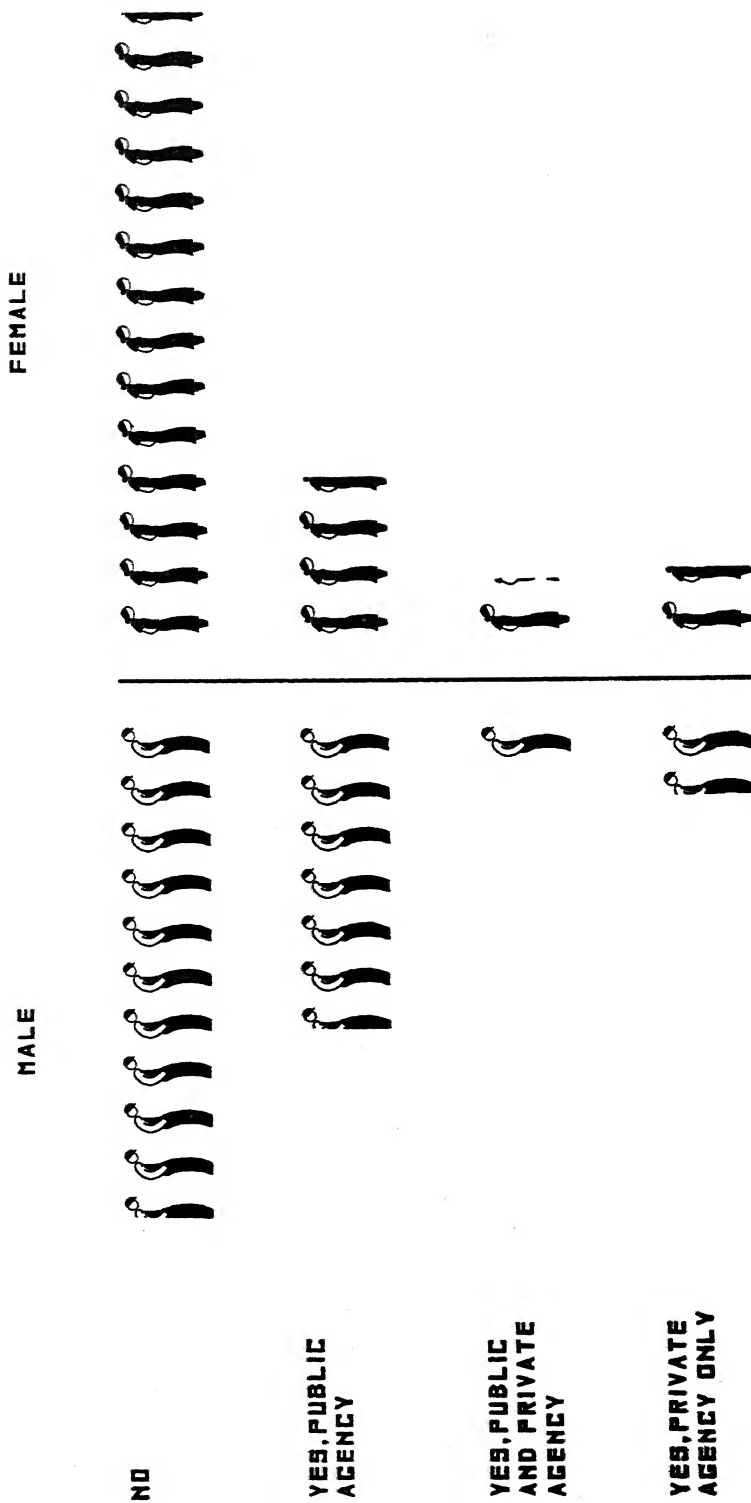
It was a part of the interviewer's task to ask each unemployed youth what he was doing about getting a job. The first step was to determine whether or not the youth was registered in any public or private employment agency.

When the entire unemployed group of both sexes is considered, it will be seen that only 36 per cent (36.4) were registered for work in any kind of agency. A substantial part of this nonregistration is doubtless due to the absence of such services in certain areas. Yet it was found that in Baltimore, where the services of both private and public agencies are available, less than half (46.2 per cent) of the unemployed youth were registered.

As should, perhaps, be expected, there is a lower percentage of registration among the young women than among the young men. Even so, less than half (43.4 per cent) of the males were registered in either a public or private agency.

As indicated above, we have no way of determining how much of this nonregistration is an expression of indifference on the part of the young people themselves,

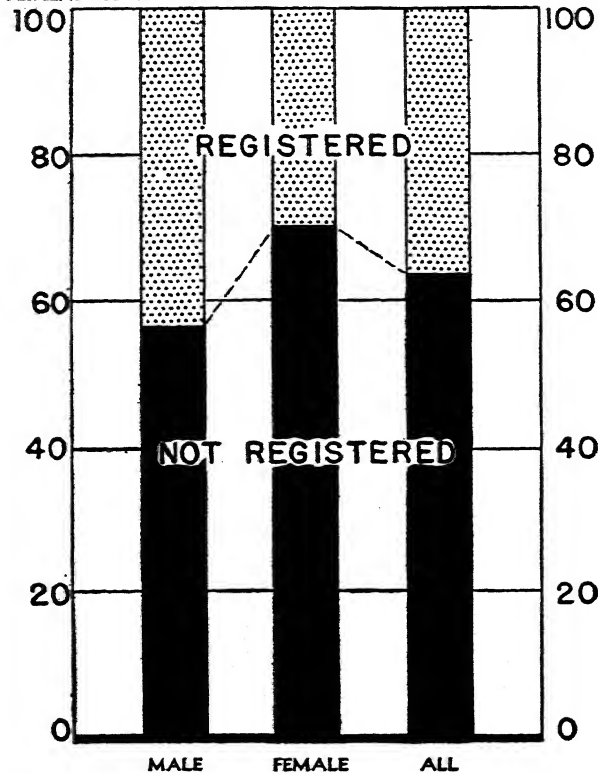
ARE UNEMPLOYED YOUTH REGISTERED IN EMPLOYMENT AGENCIES ?



EACH FIGURE REPRESENTS 5% OF EACH SEX GROUP

and how much of it is a reflection on the failure of communities to provide, and to make effective, this extremely important service. The only thing about which we can be quite sure is the fact that only slightly more than a third of the total unemployed group were registered in employment agencies.

FIGURE 12
EXTENT TO WHICH UNEMPLOYED YOUTH
HAD REGISTERED FOR JOBS
PERCENTAGE OF UNEMPLOYED YOUTH



Are They Actively Seeking Work?

After finding out whether or not the unemployed youth were registered in some kind of employment agency, the interviewer's next step was to arrive at a conclusion as to whether the youth could reasonably be considered as actively seeking work. In order to arrive at this conclusion, the interviewer asked each youth if he had made any specific effort to get a job *during the week preceding the interview*. Had he approached any employer, and had he made any inquiries about the employment possibilities in his neighborhood? On the basis of the answers made to these and similar questions, the interviewer arrived at his conclusion as to whether or not the youth was actively seeking work.

TABLE 62—EXTENT TO WHICH MALE AND FEMALE UNEMPLOYED YOUTH ACTIVELY SOUGHT WORK DURING THE WEEK PRECEDING THE INTERVIEW

Classification of youth	Percentage of unemployed who actively sought work	Number of unemployed who actively sought work
All unemployed.....	48.3	1,267
Male unemployed.....	59.6	767
Female unemployed.....	27.4	500

It will be remembered that only 36 per cent of the unemployed youth of both sexes were registered in employment agencies. From Table 62 it appears, however, that 48 per cent were regarded by the interviewers as actively seeking work. This means that, so far as the impersonal judgments of trained interviewers can be accepted as reliable, less than half the youth who were found to be unemployed had recently made aggressive efforts to do something about it. It was further discovered that there was little difference in the activity of youth from relief and from nonrelief families.

SOCIAL CONSEQUENCES OF UNEMPLOYMENT

About half the unemployed youth had never worked on full-time jobs. At the time of the interview, this group had already been out of school an average of more than a year and a half (1.6 years for the males and 2.1 years for the females). Exactly how much of this continued idleness was the result of the failure of communities to provide work, and how much of it was the result of the youth's indifference, is, of course, problematical.

When due allowance is made for the failure or the inability of communities to provide adequate employment opportunities for their youth, the facts seem to indicate that, among large numbers of our youth population, an apathy and indifference has developed that can hardly be said to be in keeping with what are generally accepted as the traditional qualities of a younger generation.

There is every reason to believe that the bulk of unemployment among young people is directly traceable to inadequate employment opportunities. Yet, whether long periods of idleness are voluntary or enforced, the final result for the individual is very much the same. Such periods are veritable breeding grounds for the "don't care a damn" philosophy. They retard mental and social growth, and they are quite often as packed with unfortunate consequences to the individual as to society and the community.

The average person can be told only so many times that his community has no use for what he has to offer. Sooner or later, by the force of sheer repetition, he will come to believe it. And one result is the development of a tendency to look to the super-community, the government, to take things over and set things straight.

As we shall see in our later discussion of attitudes, the contemporary youth's conception of the sphere of national government seems to have widened considerably beyond that of preceding generations. Matters which rightly or wrongly have been more or less traditionally accepted as responsibilities of the individual, or the local community, are becoming increasingly accepted by young people as responsibilities which should properly be laid at the doorstep of the national capitol. This apparent impulse of young people to add item upon item to the total responsibility of government can hardly be said to be growing out of a ripe knowledge of the deficiencies of our social order, however obvious and glaring these deficiencies may be. Nor is it growing out of an enlightened and mature conception of the sphere of government in a modern state. It is growing out of a suspicion that, somehow, the world they have inherited is a cock-eyed world, and that the only agency wise enough and big enough to do anything about it is an ever expanding national government that can and will set the crooked straight.

At a later time, we will show that the attitude of large numbers of this younger generation toward the effectiveness of the suffrage, which is the very spine of a democracy, has already been hardened with skepticism. Thus we have an electorate of tomorrow that, while calling for expanded government activity and responsibility, seems to have a definitely limited faith in the ability of democratic institutions to achieve the ends they desire.

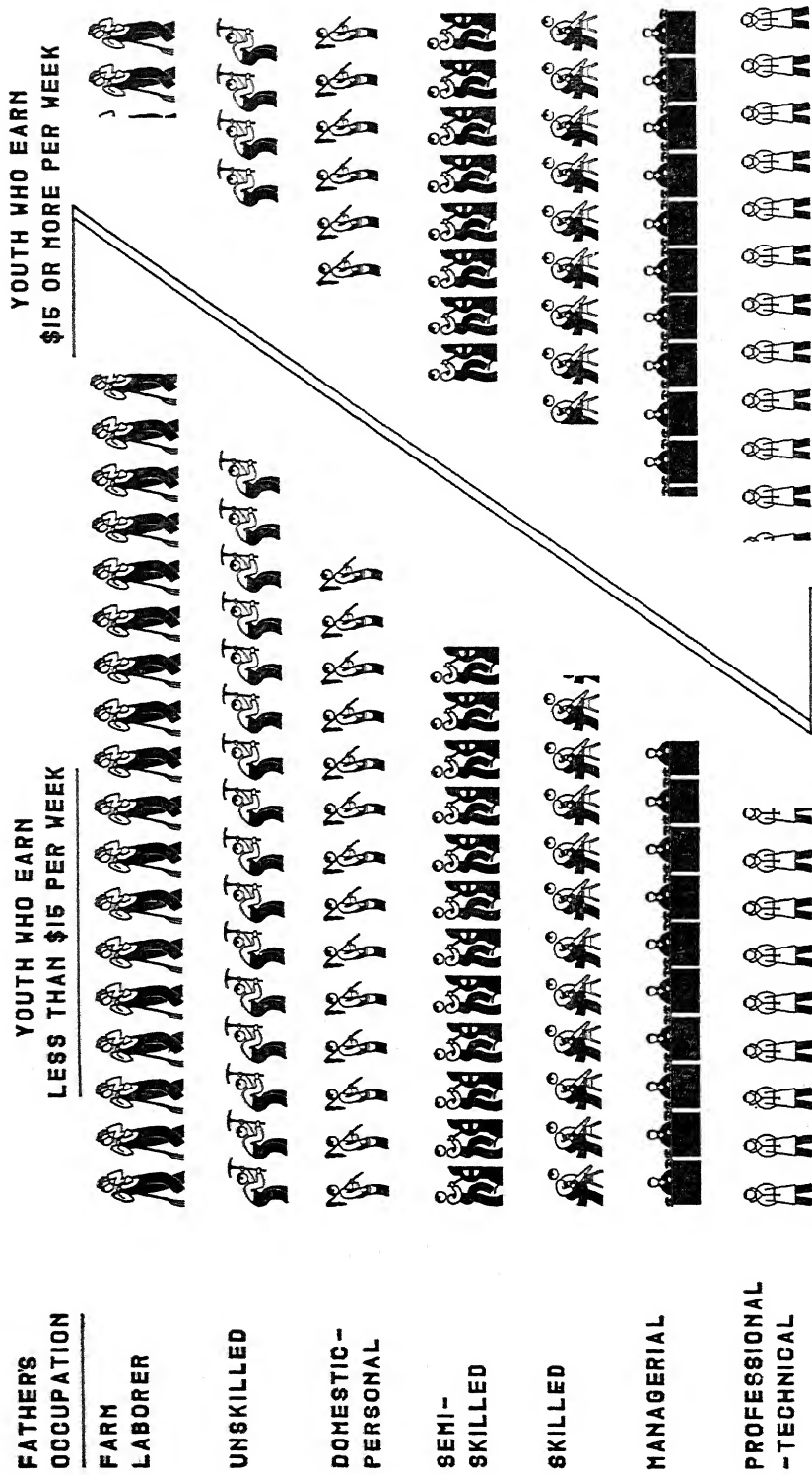
It would be idle to suggest that youth, as such, entertain any recognized enthusiasms for any nondemocratic forms of government. Without giving it a name, what they seem to want is a government that will do more and more of their thinking and planning for them. So far as they are concerned, that government is best which governs most.

All this is pertinent, at this point, because we are dealing with apathy and indifference. Whether it is the apathy and indifference of large numbers of our youth toward the opportunities that exist, or whether it is the hardbitten callousness of communities that make little effort to provide opportunities, is beside the point. They both lead to waste. Both are loaded with consequences that are unfortunate for the youth themselves, the economy of our social system, and the ultimate destiny of our democracy. And the only effective way to avoid these consequences is to make it quite clear to youth that they, too, have a place in our social and economic scheme of things.

SYMPTOMS OF SOCIAL STRATIFICATION

To a certain extent, the solution of what has been defined as the youth problem lies in expanding the sphere of influence and increasing the effectiveness of agencies that already exist. Yet, important and desirable as such changes are, they cannot in themselves be expected to accomplish all that must be done.

RELATION OF FATHERS' OCCUPATIONS TO THE WAGES THEIR EMPLOYED CHILDREN RECEIVE



EACH FIGURE REPRESENTS 5% OF THE YOUTH WHOSE FATHERS WERE IN SPECIFIED OCCUPATIONAL GROUPS

In so far as the youth problem is basically economic, it can be solved only by economic means. Thus an approach to it resolves itself into a matter of not only improving educational and vocational programs for those youth whose circumstances permit their taking advantage of them, but also taking whatever steps are necessary to provide such opportunities for the substantial proportion of young people who do not, at present, enjoy them.

In previous sections, we have presented data that indicated the extent to which the plight of certain groups of our youth population seem to be the direct result of the economic level of the youth's parental family. In Tables 15, 16, and 17 (pages 60 and 61), we showed how low grade attainment was generally associated with the youth whose fathers were employed in the low income occupations. The difference between the average grade completed by the youth whose fathers were unskilled laborers and that completed by youth whose fathers were in the professions was found to be over four grades. In Table 46 (page 121), we saw how clearly the wages youth received were related to the school grades they had completed. Thus the characteristics of the father's condition, or economic level, tend to be transmitted, by means of more or less education, to the children.

YOUTH'S OCCUPATIONS

There is, however, a more direct relationship between the actual economic level of the father and the probable economic level of the child. This is revealed by the fact that youth tend to stay in the same general occupational fields that their fathers are in.

This relationship is presented in Figure 13. The three different groups represent all the fathers of the employed youth. The "white-collar" group includes the professional-technical, proprietary, sales, and clerical workers. The middle group is the "skilled and semi-skilled" trades. The "unskilled and personal" group is composed of the lowest level of workers—the unskilled, the domestic—personal workers, the farm tenants, and farm laborers.

Almost two-thirds (64 per cent) of the children of "white-collar" fathers were employed in "white-collar" occupations. Nearly 60 per cent of the children whose fathers were employed in the lowest level occupations were *also* employed in those occupations. Thus the economic power or frailties of the fathers tend to be passed on to the children.

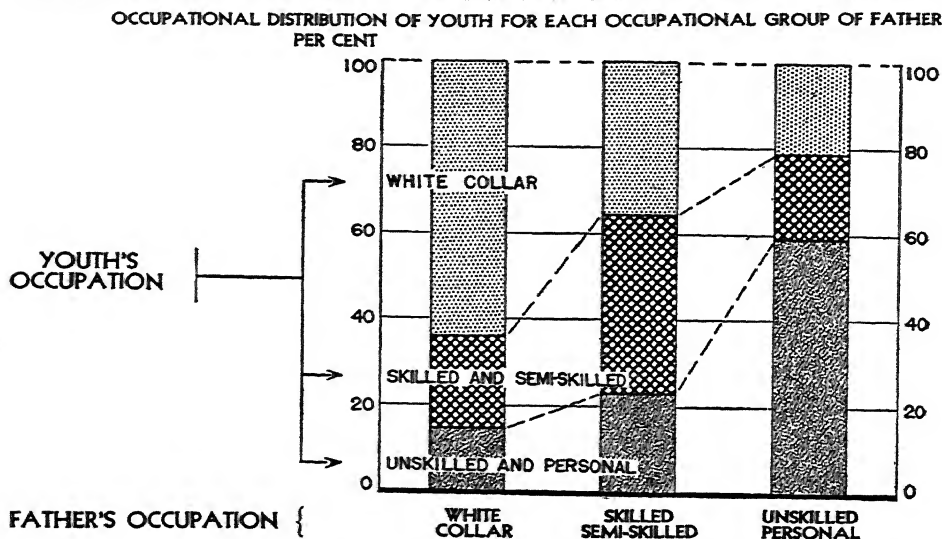
It is significant that less than one out of every six (15 per cent) of the children of white-collar parents dropped to the lowest occupational level. It is quite as significant that only one in five (21 per cent) of the youth whose fathers worked in the lowest level occupations climbed to the top occupational level and found employment on a white-collar job.

Although more than 60 per cent of the out-of-school youth stated that they would

take free vocational training if their communities would provide it, only 4 per cent of this group were found to be taking such training at the time of the interview. Inasmuch as vocational or academic training is quite generally associated with advancement from a lower to a higher occupational level, it seems clear that the father-child vocational relationships, as suggested by Figure 13, are not likely to be substantially changed.

FIGURE 13

EXTENT TO WHICH YOUTH FOLLOW THE OCCUPATIONS OF THEIR FATHERS



As things now stand, the chances are about three to one against a young person, whose father is in one of the lower income jobs, rising to the white-collar level. And the chance that the child of a white-collar worker will *not* drop to the lowest occupational levels is better than four to one.

YOUTH'S STANDARD OF LIVING

We have already seen (Table 5) how clearly the occupation of a youth's father is related to the home conveniences the youth enjoys. It was discovered, for example, that only 0.3 per cent of the children of fathers employed in professional-technical occupations had no conveniences in their homes, while the homes of 35.7 per cent of the youth whose fathers were farm laborers had no conveniences whatever.

Thus we have evidence to suggest how definitely the father's occupation is related to his general standard of living. The fact that the *youth will tend to inherit* his father's living standard is suggested by Table 63. This table presents the median weekly wages received by the children of fathers engaged in the various occupational fields.

These data, it will be noted, point to the relation between the *father's* job and the *youth's* wage. The children of white-collar parents earned the highest wages. The

children of the intermediate fathers earned the intermediate wages. The youth whose fathers were in the lowest occupational groups earned the lowest wages.

TABLE 63—RELATION OF EMPLOYED YOUTH'S
WAGE TO HIS FATHER'S OCCUPATION

Father's occupation	Median wage of youth
"White-collar:"	
Professional-technical.....	\$16.77
Office-sales.....	15.57
Proprietary-managerial.....	15.17
Skilled and semi-skilled:	
Skilled.....	13.90
Semi-skilled.....	12.97
Unskilled and personal:	
Domestic-personal.....	10.63
Farm owner-tenant.....	9.28
Unskilled.....	9.02
Farm laborer.....	8.17

SUMMARY

An analysis of the data submitted in the preceding sections has led us to the following general conclusions:

1. The ultimate effect of a "youth program" should be the general improvement of the social and economic level of all young people. The first and basic step in this direction must, of necessity, be something that approaches more closely the universal provision of opportunities for *all* youth.

2. Once an effort is made to provide something more closely resembling a general equality of opportunity for all youth, existing agencies should be expanded to the end that the wasted years between school and employment will become periods of profitable activity.

3. Along with the expansion of such existing agencies as full-time and part-time schools, employment offices, and community recreation centers, new agencies, such as vocational "clinics," should be created. These should be especially adapted to serve the needs of youth for whom formal school education is no longer desirable.

It is obvious that these three approaches can be followed concurrently. The first is equivalent to a more comprehensive program of student aid along the lines already explored by the National Youth Administration. The second calls for an enlargement of the sphere of influence of agencies which already exist in some communities. The third consists in the creation and development of instrumentalities capable of providing services that are not being provided by existing agencies. The total effect of an aggressive prosecution of these three objectives would ultimately lead to a "youth program" that would yield high social and economic returns to both the younger generation and our national life.

CHAPTER 5

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Y O U T H A T P L A Y



AN AMERICAN who stays a while in Jerusalem is likely to come home with mixed feelings about the people and places he has seen. It is quite possible that he will recall his first surprise at the passionate interest of its people in mosques and holy ground, and the apparent indifference of these same people to the anemones that throw a colorful blanket of soft beauty over the scars of the Mount of Olives.

An Arab who remains a while in the United States might, with even better reason, return to his country somewhat perplexed by the nature of a people that can give itself over, with such wholehearted passion, to the veneration, or the damnation, of a political idea, and yet remain unmoved by our tragic waste of human resources. The anemones that "waste their fragrance on the desert air" and young people for whom the art of dawdling has become an unwanted career have, it seems to us, a good deal in common.

Another vivid impression that an American in certain parts of the Near East is apt to bring home with him is the apparent indifference of the average person to the prevalence of blindness. Trachoma has been accepted, in many quarters, with a truly oriental submission to what appears to be the will of God. Blindness just comes—it is written in the stars, and, having come, it is the business of the blind to accept their darkened world with quiet grace.

Social, as well as physical, ills are quite as likely to be accepted with such "oriental" resignation. Let us consider, for a moment, the matter of crime in the United States. It seems that our very familiarity with criminal and delinquent behavior has bred an attitude that is more closely related to indifference than contempt.

The United States has, with more or less justification, acquired the doubtful distinction of being the "most criminal" of all the civilized nations of the world. In 1930 there were three times as many homicidal deaths per 100,000 people in the United States as in Italy, more than four times the number in Germany, and ten times the number in Great Britain.¹ And in 1933 more than 40 out of every 100 of the criminals committed to federal and state prisons and reformatories were between the ages of 15 and 24.² The national bill for this incredible extravaganza is variously estimated at from \$4,000,000,000 to \$16,000,000,000 a year, and a low estimate would probably put the annual loss to each family in the nation at about \$160.

And, to make matters worse, anybody who reads the newspapers knows that "only a small proportion of our people who commit crimes are caught. Of those

¹ Statistical Bureau, Metropolitan Life Insurance Company.

² *Prisoners in Federal and State Prisons and Reformatories in 1933*, Bureau of Census, U. S. Department of Commerce, 1933.

arrested, only a few are convicted; and of those convicted, only a few are imprisoned.”³

What might be called the “Age Curve of American Crime” reaches its peak between the ages of 20 and 24. From that point on it progressively decreases with every age group. No qualified student of delinquency and crime believes that there is anything peculiarly “criminal” about these ages. A far more plausible explanation is the fact that these years generate physical and nervous energies that are often as disturbing as they are superfluous. If the youth’s total environment is not adapted to the effective and productive absorption of these energies, antisocial conduct is very often an inevitable result.

This general theme about the kind of work the devil finds for idle hands to do has been developed so often and so effectively that it needs little elaboration from us. Innumerable studies have been made, and reports written, on the subject of the relationship between idleness and delinquent behavior. A careful study, made by the Baltimore Criminal Justice Commission, of a police district where delinquency was unusually high revealed that of 592 boys arrested only 5 per cent had any supervised recreational activities, while 82 per cent were forced to resort to street play and corner gangs. Yet in this district there were 39 vacant lots of varying size which could have been converted into playgrounds.

The best answer to this particular challenge of youthful delinquency and crime is the same as the answer to the whole youth problem: programs of constructive activity.

When we have referred, in previous sections of this report, to developing national “programs of constructive activity” for young people, we have naturally included, in our thinking, programs of recreation. Even if the activities of the schools were so expanded and so revised as to absorb and hold a larger proportion of our idle youth, and even if effective vocational programs would result in placing larger numbers of our youth in profitable employment, there would still be a gap that only constructive recreational programs could fill.

It is probably unfortunate that, in our efforts to “sell” recreational programs to the people of America, we have laid such stress on the value of recreation as a sponge to absorb the superfluous energies that might otherwise seek an outlet in antisocial channels. By our emphasis on this negative phase of the value of play, public recreation, in some minds, has acquired the character of a kind of medicine—a social prophylactic. It is, of course, exactly this. But it is also a great deal more.

Recreation has positive as well as negative values. It not only tends to translate human energy into socially desirable conduct, but it adds to the social and spiritual

³ “Crime in the United States,” *The National Forum*.

stature of the person who indulges in it. There is a good deal of basic sense in the belief that one can arrive at "strength through joy," as there is also something sound in the conviction that "the days that make us happy make us wise."

The need for more effective and comprehensive recreational programs in most of the urban and rural areas in the United States reminds us of Mark Twain's observation that everybody talks about the weather, but nobody seems to be doing much about it. So far as our data are concerned, this seems particularly true in farm areas, where one out of every five young men interviewed reported that his principal leisure time activity was loafing.

HOW YOUTH SPEND THEIR LEISURE TIME

Trying to find out exactly how people have spent their leisure time during, say, the past year, is like trying to discover how they have spent their last year's earnings. As a rule, they can't tell you because they don't know.

Even more difficult, however, is the task of discovering the *one* leisure-time activity in which the most time was spent. If a youth is asked this question in January, he will be tempted to say "skating." If it is put to him in July, he is more likely to name "swimming."

Also, when we speak of the youth's principal leisure-time activity, it will be understood that the choice of any youth's activity will, of necessity, be influenced and limited by the recreational opportunities and facilities available in his community. For large numbers of young people, especially those living in the less populous areas, this activity amounts to little more than a choice among what, to them, is the least of various evils.

Leisure-Time Activities of Young Men and Women

So, with these suggestions as to the limitations of such data, we present the table on page 162. This table reveals the responses of young men and women to the question that was designed to uncover the one type of activity in which each youth spent most of his leisure time during the year preceding the interview.

Perhaps attention should again be called to the fact that the field work of the present study was carried on during the summer and fall months. The nature of these seasons doubtless had the tendency to increase the number of youth who named some kind of outdoor sport as the type of recreation in which they most frequently indulged.

Probably the most significant item in Table 64 is the 13.1 per cent of the young men who reported that their chief leisure-time activity was loafing. There are obvious

subjective factors that would operate to reduce the number of such admissions below what is probably the actual number. Thus the number of young people who had spent most of their free time doing nothing is probably much larger than this 13.1 per cent would indicate.

It is also of some significance, perhaps, that over a third (35 per cent) of the young women named reading as their most time-consuming leisure-time activity. An analysis of these data revealed that, for the girls, reading was the most popular pastime for all ages.

TABLE 64—PRINCIPAL LEISURE TIME ACTIVITIES OF YOUTH ACCORDING TO SEX

Male youth			Female youth		
Rank	Activity	Percentage	Rank	Activity	Percentage
1	Individual sports.....	21.6	1	Reading.....	35.0
2	Reading.....	16.7	2	Dating, dancing.....	13.7
3	Team games.....	15.7	3	Handicrafts, hobbies.....	13.4
4	Loafing ^a	13.1	4	Movies.....	12.0
5	Dating, dancing.....	10.9	5	Individual sports.....	11.1
6	Movies.....	9.4	6	Loafing ^a	5.4
7	Hobbies.....	5.5	7	Listening to radio.....	2.2
8	Listening to radio.....	1.8	8	Team games.....	1.1
9	Quiet games.....	1.5	9	Quiet games.....	0.8
10	Other activities.....	3.8	10	Other activities.....	5.3
Total.....		100.0	Total.....		100.0
Number of youth.....		6,872	Number of youth.....		6,635

^a This includes idling, sitting on front steps, talking on street corners, pleasure driving.

Leisure-Time Activities of White and Negro Youth

The chief recreational activities, as reported by white and Negro youth, are revealed in Table 65. It will be seen, from a glance at this table, that the chief leisure-time activities of the great majority of both races were inclined to be individual, rather than social, in character. Reading, individual sports, movies, hobbies, loafing, and listening to the radio account for about three-fourths of the responses of white youth and for about two-thirds of the responses of Negroes.

About the only activities that could be said to be of a group, or "social," nature are dancing (with which is included what used to be called "courting"), team games, and such so-called "quiet" games as checkers, bridge, and poker. Field observations convinced us that much of this dancing was done in night clubs, road-houses, and "beer joints," where the "supervision" consisted of the presence of a

PRINCIPAL LEISURE-TIME ACTIVITY OF FARM YOUTH

MALE

INDIVIDUAL
SPORTS



FEMALE

LOAFING



TEAM
GAMES



READING



DANCING
AND DATING



HOBBIES



EACH FIGURE REPRESENTS THE RESPONSES OF 2% OF THE YOUTH IN EACH SEX GROUP

floor manager, or "bouncer," whose chief duties were to see that bills were paid and that customers showed at least some respect for the right of other customers to dance.

TABLE 65—PRINCIPAL LEISURE-TIME ACTIVITIES
OF YOUTH ACCORDING TO RACE

Activity	Percentage of each race	
	White	Negro
Reading.....	26.8	19.1
Individual sports.....	17.6	10.2
Dancing, dating.....	12.2	12.7
Movies.....	10.6	11.0
Handicrafts and hobbies.....	9.3	10.1
Loafing.....	8.4	14.3
Team games.....	8.0	11.5
Listening to radio.....	2.1	1.3
Quiet games.....	0.8	3.2
Other activities.....	4.2	6.6
Total.....	100.0	100.0
Number of youth.....	11,428	2,079

Leisure-Time Activities of Farm Youth

This concentration upon individual, rather than group, types of recreation is even more clearly indicated by the activities of farm youth. Almost 60 per cent of

TABLE 66—PRINCIPAL LEISURE-TIME ACTIVITIES OF FARM YOUTH ACCORDING TO
SEX AND RACE

Male white		Male Negro ^a		Female white		Female Negro	
Activity	Per cent	Activity	Per cent	Activity	Per cent	Activity	Per cent
Sports ^b	24.1	Team games.....	26.4	Reading.....	33.1	Dancing ^c	25.1
Loafing.....	19.2	Sports ^b	19.1	Handicrafts.....	18.9	Handicrafts.....	22.6
Reading.....	14.4	Loafing.....	19.1	Movies.....	9.2	Reading.....	18.3
Movies.....	11.0	Dancing ^c	12.7	Dancing ^c	9.0	Loafing.....	10.4
Dancing ^c	11.0	Movies.....	5.2	Loafing.....	7.2	Movies.....	7.5
Team games.....	7.7	Reading.....	4.3	Sports ^b	6.4	Sports ^b	2.2
Hobbies.....	4.7	Quiet games.....	4.3	Radio ^d	3.0	Quiet games.....	1.4
Radio ^d	2.4	Hobbies.....	2.3	Team games.....	1.3	Radio ^d	1.1
Quiet games.....	0.8	Other.....	6.6	Quiet games.....	0.3	Team games.....	0.3
Other.....	4.7			Other.....	6.6	Other.....	11.1
Total.....	100.0		100.0		100.0		100.0
No. of youth.....	1,174		424		955		279

^a None of this group gave "listening to the radio" as a principal activity.

^b Individual sports such as swimming, tennis, golf.

^c Dancing and dating.

^d Listening to the radio.

the 1,174 white male youth who lived on farms stated that their chief leisure-time activity was either some kind of individual sport, loafing, or reading. Exactly two-thirds of the 955 white farm girls named such relatively individual activities as reading, handicrafts, and movies.

The reason for this unfortunate concentration upon individual types of recreation in farm areas is not in any lack of enthusiasm of farm youth for group recreational activities. In a later section, we will discuss what young people feel their communities most need. It will be seen that these farm youth are keenly conscious of the paucity of community facilities for social recreation. They take their fun alone or in pairs, not because they prefer it, but because it is so often the only thing to do.

One farm youth, whom an interviewer discovered idling about his father's barnyard, spoke with understandable bitterness about the action of his county's school board in consolidating the county's schools. This boy was out of school, and perhaps can be forgiven his lack of appreciation for the generally recognized advantages of the consolidation idea. As an out-of-school youth, about the only effect this consolidation had upon him was to remove from his communal life a time-honored meeting place and social center. The remedy here, of course, is *not* a relaxation in the program of consolidation, but rather a continued use, for social purposes, of the original school buildings.

In our discussion of the question "where do youth prefer to live?" we uncovered the fact that 75 per cent of the youth living in villages, and 67 per cent of those living in towns, expressed a desire to live in some other kind of community. This would indicate that three out of every four young people now living in villages would move to another locality if the opportunity presented itself. To those who deplore the tendency of populations to concentrate in urban areas, this is hardly cheerful news. But it is at least understandable, and reflects a very healthy sort of protest against the incredible indifference of so many "small towns" toward the recreational needs of their young people.

Relation of Grade Attainment to Leisure-Time Activities

Table 67 suggests how the amount of schooling a youth has received is likely to affect the type of leisure-time activity he will later choose. The proportions of out-of-school youth who named reading as their chief recreational activity progressively increased with the school grades attained. Also loafing, as a "recreational activity," decreases with grade attainment. It should be borne in mind that, with the exception of the college youth, there were no significant variations in the median ages of these youth at the time they were interviewed. These differences therefore are quite definitely grade, and not age, differences.

The progressive decline in the amount of loafing as youth have gone from the lower to the higher educational levels suggests that one of the desirable effects of schooling is to substitute definite recreational activities for sheer aimlessness.

TABLE 67—PRINCIPAL LEISURE-TIME ACTIVITIES OF OUT-OF-SCHOOL YOUTH ACCORDING TO THE SCHOOL GRADES THEY COMPLETED

Activity	Percentage of youth in each grade group					
	6th grade or less	7th or 8th	9th 10th 11th	11th or 12th graduate	1, 2, or 3 years beyond ^a	4 or more years beyond ^a
Reading.....	11.5	17.9	23.3	32.2	42.6	42.9
Individual sports.....	12.4	13.6	15.9	15.6	15.2	18.4
Dancing, dating.....	12.6	10.9	15.5	14.0	10.4	8.3
Movies.....	9.4	12.8	13.4	10.2	8.2	7.6
Loafing.....	21.7	15.8	7.5	5.9	3.9	4.3
Hobbies.....	8.7	10.1	8.4	10.4	10.7	9.9
Team games.....	10.1	8.2	8.7	5.4	4.0	3.5
Listening to radio.....	2.8	2.4	2.3	1.8	0.9	1.0
Quiet games.....	2.2	1.8	1.0	0.7	0.9	1.8
Other activities.....	8.6	6.5	4.0	3.8	3.2	2.3
Total.....	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0
Number of youth.....	1,483	2,762	2,569	2,885	770	396

^a Beyond high school graduation.

Quoted below are a few of the statements young people made concerning the way they spend their leisure time:

"Just walk around like the other girls do." (This 21-year-old single girl left school at the completion of the third grade.)

"Read, movies, and dance. We sleigh ride down the main street in the winter, if they don't catch us." (A railroad crosses the main street.)

"Piddling around, visiting, and reading." (An 18-year-old single boy, farm laborer.)

"Reading and sitting around home and listening to the radio. I try to be as little expense as I can to my mother." (A 22-year-old boy, ninth-grade education, and unemployed.)

Interviewer: "What do you do with your spare time?"

Youth: "I play cards, loaf, eat, and sleep."

Interviewer: "What do you read—newspapers, magazines, or what?"

Youth: "Naw, I don't read no magazines, I read True Stories . . . well, I guess that's a magazine too, ain't it?"

"Getting drunk."

"Go around and gossip."

"Nothing to do, just do nothin'."

"I think."

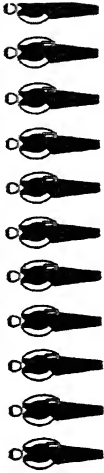
"Ride on the beer truck, ride in a car, loaf."

DO YOUTH BELONG TO CLUBS ?

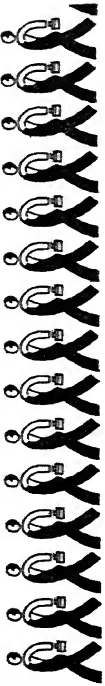
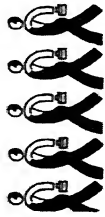
YOUTH WHO
BELONG

YOUTH WHO
DO NOT BELONG

STUDENTS



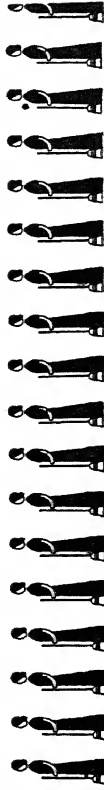
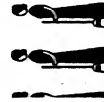
EMPLOYED



UNEMPLOYED



HOMEMAKERS



EACH FIGURE REPRESENTS 5% OF THE YOUTH OF EACH GROUP

"Running around, reading, and watching trains."

"Home loafing, sitting on corner, down in the bar drinking."

"I sit in the square."

"I sit in the barber shop."

"I sit in front of the door."

"Sit down and look out of the window; listen to the radio of the people upstairs."

"Walk around and walk around and go home and go to bed . . . all my time is spare." (A 21-year-old Negro boy.)

"Sets down and thinks . . . nothing else to do." (A 23-year-old unmarried Negro girl.)

"Hang around corner, play cards, and shoot pool."

"Gamble, shoot craps, read, and play pool." (A 17-year-old white male, out of school and unemployed.)

"See what devilment we can get into. We generally get a bottle of whiskey and all get canned."

"Lay under a shade tree in the summer. Nothing in the winter."

So much for the "purposeful and constructive activities" of large numbers of our youth.

CLUB ACTIVITIES OF YOUNG PEOPLE

Further evidence of the dearth of social activity among young people is found in our data on the extent of club membership.

TABLE 68—EXTENT TO WHICH YOUTH BELONGED TO CLUBS

Group	Percentage of each group					Number of youth
	No club	One club	Two clubs	Three or more	Total	
All youth.....	74.5	18.6	4.7	2.2	100.0	13,453
White.....	72.5	20.0	5.1	2.4	100.0	11,386
Negro.....	84.7	11.0	2.9	1.4	100.0	2,080
Male.....	72.1	21.0	5.1	1.8	100.0	6,848
Female.....	76.9	16.1	4.3	2.7	100.0	6,606
16-year-olds.....	69.8	20.7	6.5	3.0	100.0	1,506
18-year-olds.....	73.1	20.3	4.2	2.4	100.0	1,471
20-year-olds.....	75.1	18.9	3.9	2.1	100.0	1,633
22-year-olds.....	73.7	19.3	5.1	1.9	100.0	1,398
24-year-olds.....	76.3	16.3	5.1	2.3	100.0	1,537
Farm.....	85.8	10.5	2.6	1.1	100.0	2,837
Village.....	76.4	16.9	4.7	2.0	100.0	3,048
Town.....	70.4	21.3	5.6	2.7	100.0	1,576
City.....	69.2	22.5	5.6	2.7	100.0	5,988

As revealed by Table 68, three out of every four youth (74.5 per cent) did not belong to any organization whatever. The lowest degree of club membership was

found among youth living on farms. But even in the cities, where such membership should be relatively easy, only three out of ten were found to be members of some kind of club.

Relation of Club Membership to School Grade Completed

An interesting relationship is uncovered when these data on club membership are considered from the standpoint of the grades youth attained in school. Figure 14 indicates that, as youth attain higher grades their participation in club activities, once they leave school, tends to increase. This suggests that schooling as an experience cultivates an enthusiasm for social activity that is carried over into the youth's social life after he leaves school.

FIGURE 14

EXTENT TO WHICH STUDENTS AND NONSTUDENTS BELONGED TO CLUBS (PERCENTAGE IN EACH SCHOOL GRADE GROUP OF OUT-OF-SCHOOL YOUTH)

PER CENT

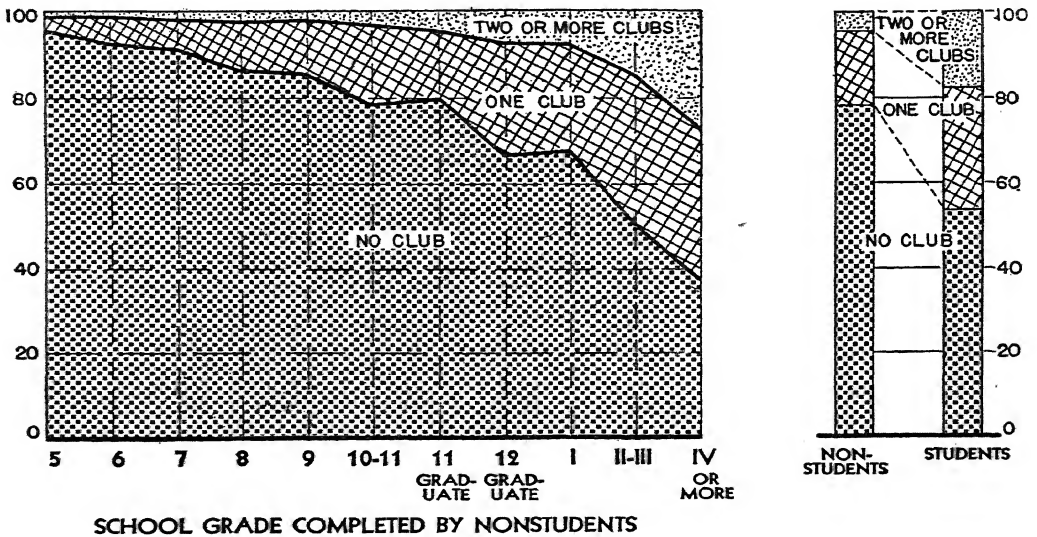


Figure 14 also reflects the significant difference in the extent of club membership among student and nonstudent groups. The student group, which may be said to need such social activity less than the youth who are out of school, has a substantially higher proportion of youth who belong to some kind of organization. Part of this difference is doubtless explained by the fact that more clubs are available to students, as they are frequently part of the school program.

Should Clubs Be Self-governed?

As a kind of guide to individuals or groups that might be interested in promoting club activity among young people, we have made an effort to discover the extent to which youth feel that organizations of young people should be self-governed.

In the organization of a club for young people, as in the development of a community recreational program, it is not only realistic, but fundamentally important, to make every effort to adjust its character to the tastes of the youth themselves. No degree of persuasion or eloquence is likely to induce a youth to join, and remain active, in a club that bores him. Among other things that large numbers of actual and potential club members want is the pleasure and privilege of playing important roles in the administration of their own organizations. In many instances, this desire for self-government has been recognized and satisfied. The great success that has been enjoyed by the all too few Boy Republics in developing a sense of civic responsibility among their members deserves the highest kind of praise.

From the data submitted in Table 69 it seems quite clear that youth prefer, or would prefer, to govern their own organizations.

TABLE 69—YOUTH'S ESTIMATE OF THE AMOUNT OF SELF-GOVERNMENT THERE SHOULD BE IN YOUTH ORGANIZATIONS

Group	Percentage of each group specifying amount of self-government					Total	Number of youth
	None	Slight amount	Much	Complete	No opinion		
All youth.....	1.9	9.3	47.7	35.3	5.8	100.0	13,528
Male.....	2.2	10.0	46.5	36.2	5.1	100.0	6,846
Female.....	1.6	8.8	49.5	34.8	5.3	100.0	6,598
White.....	1.6	9.1	47.9	36.8	4.6	100.0	11,377
Negro.....	3.5	11.0	48.1	28.7	8.7	100.0	2,066
16-year-olds.....	2.9	12.9	49.4	30.9	3.9	100.0	1,509
18-year-olds.....	2.6	11.7	47.7	33.8	4.2	100.0	1,474
20-year-olds.....	1.6	9.1	46.6	36.9	5.8	100.0	1,636
22-year-olds.....	1.6	8.4	47.4	37.6	5.0	100.0	1,390
24-year-olds.....	1.4	8.9	45.2	37.8	6.7	100.0	1,531
Farm.....	0.4	6.9	55.7	26.4	10.6	100.0	2,826
Village.....	0.7	9.5	54.5	29.5	5.8	100.0	3,037
Town.....	0.8	6.1	54.7	31.9	6.5	100.0	1,580
City.....	3.4	11.4	39.2	43.8	2.2	100.0	5,983

It should perhaps be pointed out that more than half the youth (58.9 per cent) recognized the value of some adult participation in the administration of their organizations. However, of the total group 83 per cent preferred either much, or

complete, independence from the guidance or dictation of adults. Whether this indicates an altogether praiseworthy eagerness to work things out for themselves, or whether it merely reveals an abiding suspicion about the wisdom and good intentions of their elders is, again, anybody's guess.

MOVIES

Young people like to go to movies. Some of their enthusiasm is doubtless the result of intelligent discrimination among various available types of recreation. Much of it, however, is unquestionably due to the fact that, in many communities, movies constitute about the only constant source of indoor recreation.

HOW YOUTH REACT TO MOVIES

Table 70 reveals how young people react to moving picture programs generally.

TABLE 70—USUAL RESPONSE OF
YOUTH TO MOVIES

Response	Percentage of youth
Enthusiastic.....	25.2
Satisfied generally.....	47.6
Enjoys a few.....	22.9
Dislikes all.....	1.6
Never goes.....	2.7
Total.....	100.0
Number of youth.....	13,487

About three-fourths of the youth were found to be either enthusiastic or generally satisfied with moving picture programs. About a fourth (22.9 per cent) were more discriminating, enjoying only certain kinds. Less than 2 per cent (1.6) disliked all pictures, and only 2.7 per cent stated that they never go.

Table 71 reflects the preferences of young people for various types of moving pictures. Generally speaking, musical comedies, historical romances, "Westerns," and love stories seem to be most popular. Gangster and G-men pictures apparently have lost some of the appeal they had a few years ago. A preference for news and educational pictures is evidently limited to about 5 per cent of the total group.

Probably about all these data mean is that youth regard moving pictures as a kind of romantic escape. The "education" derived from the experience of seeing one is obviously accidental. They go to be entertained, and they choose the types and the "stars" that give them what they want.

TABLE 71—TYPE OF MOVIE PREFERRED BY YOUTH, ACCORDING TO SEX AND MARITAL STATUS

Type of movie	Percentage of youth in each group						
	All youth	Male	Female	Male		Female	
				Single	Married	Single	Married
Musical comedy.....	21.4	19.9	23.1	20.7	14.4	25.6	17.7
Historical.....	21.0	19.4	22.9	20.1	14.4	26.4	15.4
Action, Western.....	16.2	23.3	8.2	22.1	31.6	6.7	11.3
Love story.....	13.5	4.8	23.3	4.5	6.6	21.0	28.1
Mystery.....	9.2	10.1	8.2	10.1	10.6	6.8	11.2
Gangster, G-men.....	5.7	9.3	1.6	9.1	10.7	1.1	2.7
Comedy of manners.....	5.1	4.7	5.5	4.7	4.5	5.2	6.2
News, education.....	4.7	5.6	3.6	5.9	4.0	3.8	3.3
Other types.....	3.2	2.9	3.6	2.8	3.2	3.4	4.1
Total.....	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0
Number of youth.....	9,058	4,796	4,262	4,200	596	2,900	1,362

Some of the reactions of youth to moving picture programs are entertaining, if nothing else.

"Johnnie and I went to see 'Fatal Lady' last week. It was awful! The star's words were mumbled and her singing screeched. Johnnie and I would look at each other, go out and smoke a cigarette, and then try to listen again. Gosh! we could have saved our fifteen centises and bought a watermelon."

"A movie is something to get your mind off things . . . something you don't have to think about and which you don't think much about afterward."

"I go to see pretty clothes and high priced houses and how they express themselves."

"Some of them's pretty rotten and some of them's pretty good."

"My husband told me to rent a seat permanent."

"Those actors are good examples for people."

"I like all of them, only where the hero don't get shot."

"I like a good, deep melodrama." (This from a chap who goes to the movies "to educate myself.")

"Shirley Temple or something interesting like that."

"I like success stories that show somebody getting up in the world."

LIBRARIES

AVAILABILITY OF LIBRARY SERVICE

For the purposes of this study, a library was defined as a free circulating library in the youth's home community, open to everybody. Hence a public school library, meeting only the needs of its pupils, was not considered a "public library."

Before one can go very far toward estimating the extent to which young people are using the services of public libraries, one must first ascertain the extent to which these services are available. The matter of availability, as used here, reflects the youth's awareness of the existence of a public library in his community. Although interviewers generally checked the youth's response to this question, it is possible that libraries were actually available in some areas, but that this availability was unknown to some of the youth who were interviewed.

TABLE 72—AVAILABILITY OF PUBLIC LIBRARY, BY RACE AND RESIDENCE

Place of residence	Number and percentage reporting library not available			
	Percentage of each residence group		Number reporting no library available	
	White	Negro	White	Negro
Farm.....	58.0	97.3	1,206	681
Village.....	41.2	79.4	993	400
Town.....	7.4	70.3	101	90
City.....	0.6	1.1	32	8
Youth with no available library.....	21.0	57.5	2,332	1,179

Probably the most important factor in determining the availability of library services is that of locality of residence. In the city of Baltimore, for example, with the excellent services provided by the central and branch divisions of the Enoch Pratt Library, only one youth in a hundred reported that no library services were available. Of the white farm youth, however, over half (58 per cent) reported that no library services were available. For the Negro farm youth, only three out of every hundred reported that the communities in which they lived provided this valuable type of educational and recreational service for members of their race.

DO YOUTH USE THEIR PUBLIC LIBRARIES?

Of the total number interviewed from all areas, three-fourths reported that library services were available. Perhaps the most significant fact disclosed was that *less than half* (47.8 per cent) of the youth to whom a library was available had used that library at any time during the year preceding the interview. And only one-tenth (10.4 per cent) of this number had a library book in their possession at the time they were asked this question.

It is evident that the problem presented here is quite as much one of stimulating interest in the use of library services that exist as providing services where they do not exist. Even in the city of Baltimore, with library services that can be accepted

TABLE 73—USE OF AVAILABLE PUBLIC LIBRARY DURING PRECEDING YEAR

Use of library	Baltimore		Counties		State	
	Number	Per cent	Number	Per cent	Number	Per cent
Library used	2,308	52.6	2,301	43.7	4,609	47.8
Had book when interviewed....	545	12.4	460	8.7	1,005	10.4
No book when interviewed.....	1,763	40.2	1,841	35.0	3,604	37.4
Library not used.....	2,082	47.4	2,958	56.3	5,040	52.2
Youth with library available.....	4,390	100.0	5,259	100.0	9,649	100.0

as reasonably adequate, slightly more than half the youth (52.6 per cent) were taking advantage of these services, and only about one in eight (12.4 per cent) had a library book when he was interviewed.

FACTORS AFFECTING USE OF AVAILABLE LIBRARIES

Race and sex. There was little difference in the use that the various race and sex groups made of available library services. Forty-five per cent of the boys and 50 per cent of the girls had used their community libraries at some time during the preceding year. On the other hand, the difference between the proportions of white and Negro youth who used available libraries was the difference between 48 and 46 per cent respectively.

Residence. Just as there are substantial differences in the degree of availability of public libraries in the various types of localities, there are also significant differences in the extent of their use.

Figure 15 reveals that, while 51 per cent of the city youth took advantage of available library services, only 31.5 per cent of the young people on farms used the libraries their communities provided. An effective equalization in the provision of library services to rural and urban youth can best be achieved by a more general use of the libraries that travel on wheels—the bookmobiles. When farmers can't go to the books, the books go to the farmers.

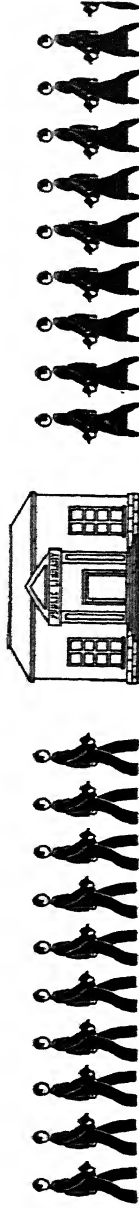
Age. There seems to be a definite relationship between the youth's age and the use he makes of library services. The younger group, in which students predominated, was most active in the use of these services. Sixty-three per cent of the 16-year-olds used their community libraries at some time during the year preceding

WHAT ABOUT PUBLIC LIBRARIES ?

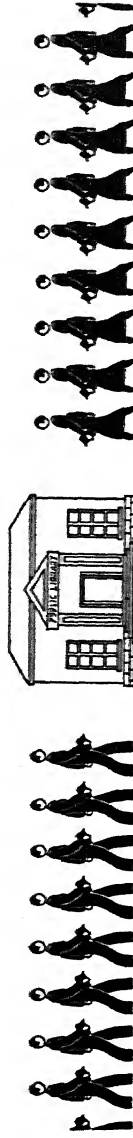
MALES

FEMALES

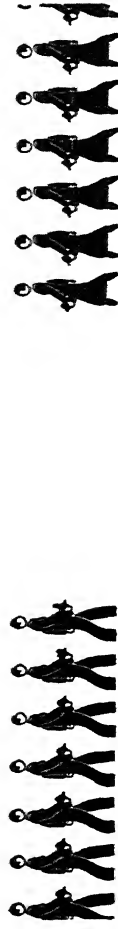
YOUTH DO NOT
USE LIBRARIES



YOUTH
USE LIBRARIES



LIBRARIES
NOT AVAILABLE

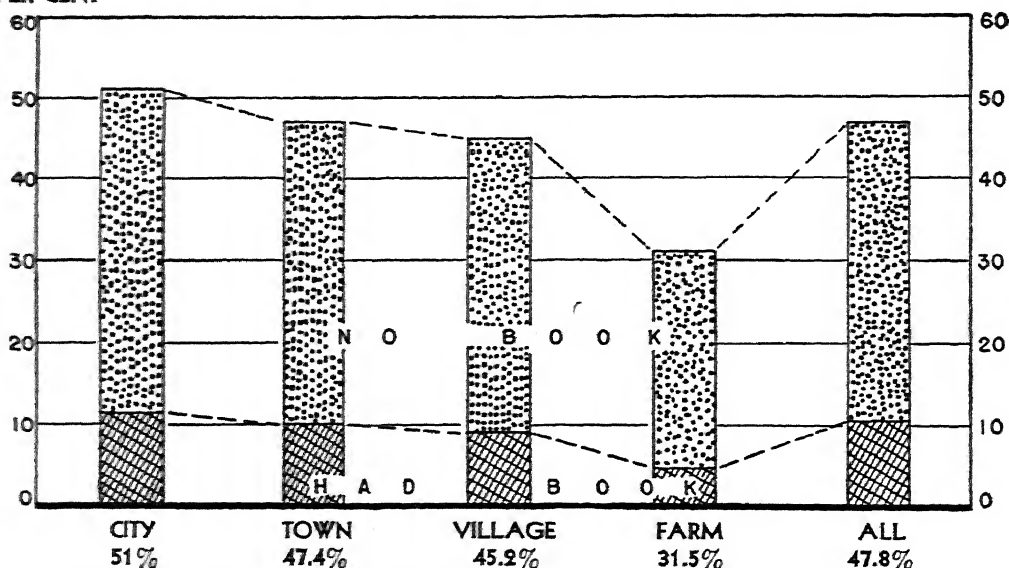


EACH FIGURE REPRESENTS 4% OF EACH SEX GROUP

the interview, while only 41 per cent of the 24-year-old group availed themselves of these services.

FIGURE 15
EXTENT TO WHICH FARM AND NONFARM YOUTH USED
AVAILABLE PUBLIC LIBRARY

(PERCENTAGE OF YOUTH WITH AVAILABLE PUBLIC LIBRARY WHO USED IT DURING PRECEDING 12 MONTHS, AND THOSE HAVING AND NOT HAVING LIBRARY BOOK AT TIME OF INTERVIEW)
PER CENT



Educational and vocational status. A consideration of these data from the standpoint of general youth groups reveals some striking dissimilarities in the extent to which they were taking advantage of public library services.

The greatest use of library services was found among youth who were still in school. The group that made the least use of them was the "homemakers." Although the unemployed were more frequent users than the employed, the difference is not extremely large (44.9 per cent of the unemployed, and 39.9 per cent for the employed).

Grade attainment. When we consider these data from the point of view of the school grades completed, even more striking differences are uncovered.

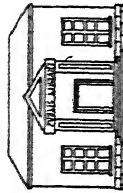
Almost three-fourths of the college graduates, as compared with less than one-fourth of the youth who had completed the eighth grade or less, were found to have used an available public library during the preceding year. Moreover, there was found a progressive increase in the use of libraries with each grade level attained. In the city of Baltimore, 86 per cent of the college graduates had made use

DO YOUTH USE PUBLIC LIBRARIES ?

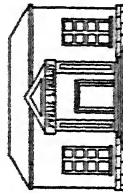
MALES

FEMALES

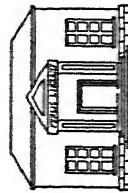
CITY



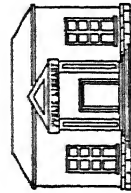
TOWN



VILLAGE



FARM



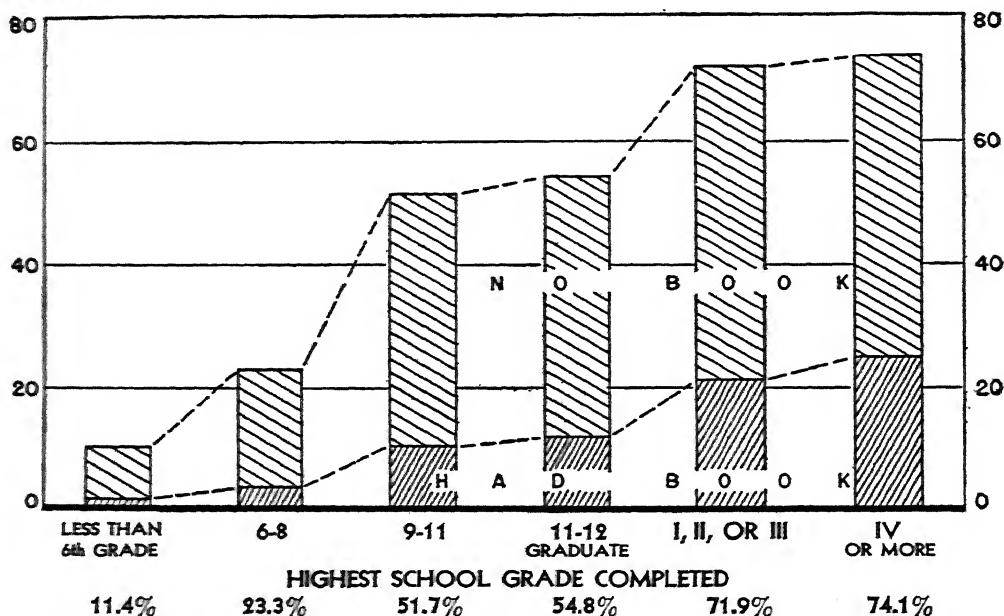
EACH FIGURE REPRESENTS 5 % OF EACH AREA-SEX GROUP

of available library services during the preceding year. In the counties, only 2 per cent of those who had left school before the completion of the sixth grade had taken advantage of similar opportunities.

FIGURE 16

EXTENT TO WHICH YOUTH OF DIFFERENT GRADE LEVELS USED AVAILABLE PUBLIC LIBRARY

(PERCENTAGE OF YOUTH WITH AVAILABLE PUBLIC LIBRARY WHO USED IT DURING PRECEDING 12 MONTHS AND THOSE HAVING AND NOT HAVING LIBRARY BOOK AT TIME OF INTERVIEW)
PER CENT



Even greater dissimilarities in the use of library services are seen when one considers the proportion who had a library book at the time of the interview. Less than 3 per cent of the youth who had completed the eighth grade or less were found to have been in possession of a library book when interviewed. On the other hand, over 25 per cent of the college graduates had books charged against their library cards. All of this indicates that the longer young people are exposed to the culture that formal schooling provides, the deeper and more enduring is their appreciation for the kind of pleasure and instruction which libraries can offer.

Father's occupation. As with all the other data so far presented, the youth's economic background, as indicated by the usual occupation of his father, seems to exert considerable influence upon the extent to which he uses available library services. This influence is probably exerted indirectly through the substantially different amount of schooling the youth of different economic backgrounds receive. We have already referred to the fact that the median grade completed by the children

of professional-technical fathers is more than four grades (4.3) higher than that of youth whose fathers were unskilled laborers. In the following table, we see that the proportions of youth in these same groups who used libraries are 70 per cent for the former, as against 33.7 per cent for the latter.

TABLE 74—EXTENT TO WHICH YOUTH USED AVAILABLE LIBRARY SERVICES, ACCORDING TO THE OCCUPATIONS OF THEIR FATHERS

Usual occupation of youth's father	Percentage who used library	Number of youth with library available
Professional-technical.....	70.0	653
Office-sales.....	60.5	991
Managerial.....	57.8	1,773
Domestic-personal.....	51.3	279
Skilled.....	47.5	2,545
Semi-skilled.....	40.3	1,165
Unskilled.....	33.7	775
Farm owner-tenant.....	27.5	980
Farm laborer.....	18.2	110
Total reporting.....	48.0	9,271

Not only does the use of libraries, but also the availability of libraries, vary strikingly with the occupations of the fathers. Nine out of every ten youth whose fathers were in professional-technical occupations reported that library services were available to them, while only two out of every ten (21 per cent) of the youth whose fathers were farm laborers made the same report.

WHY YOUTH DO NOT USE LIBRARIES

We have already seen that slightly less than half (47.8 per cent) of the youth living in communities where libraries were available actually made use of them

TABLE 75—REASONS GIVEN FOR NOT USING AVAILABLE LIBRARY SERVICES

Reasons given	Percentage not using available library		
	Male	Female	Total
Not interested in reading.....	56.1	38.5	47.9
Reads magazines and other books.....	33.2	49.3	40.7
Owes money; difficulty with library rules.....	2.1	1.6	1.8
Inconvenient distance or hours.....	1.4	2.0	1.7
Other reasons.....	7.2	8.6	7.9
Total.....	100.0	100.0	100.0
Number of youth.....	2,673	2,362	5,035

during the year preceding the interview. It is of interest to know why the other 52 per cent failed to take advantage of these available library services.

It will be seen that almost half of the youth who did not use available library services failed to do so for the simple reason that they weren't interested in reading. The other half was made up largely of youth who preferred the types of magazines or newspapers usually found on corner stands.

Although three-fourths of the total number of youth in all localities reported that some kind of public library was available, it cannot be assumed, from this, that they regarded the resources of these libraries as adequate. In fact, the comments they made concerning many of the libraries they use indicate something less than wholehearted approval. This is especially true of the reactions of young people living in rural areas where "libraries" are often little more than a few stalls full of dusty books, a good many of which have been donated by public-spirited citizens who had no use for them.

"I've read every book in that library. Should have more books."

"This library (Pratt) has the best technical section I've ever seen."

"I don't know what I'd do without it."

"The nearest library is in ———, twelve miles away. It is open only in the mornings and then only three days a week."

"The library here is for whites."

"I have to pay two dollars a year because I live out of town. I can't afford it."

"Too much bother to get there on only day it is open."

"Would rather pick up a True Story—and you don't have to bother to return it."

"I don't like their books. They are either fairy tales or too deep for me."

"If you get an automobile book, it's ten years back."

"To tell the truth, I fall asleep when I read. My father's the same way. I take the funny papers to bed with me and then fall asleep."

"They don't have no gangster stories."

"They need more nonfiction—especially some books on vocational guidance."

WHAT YOUTH THINK ABOUT THE RECREATIONAL PROGRAMS OF THEIR COMMUNITIES

It will be remembered that our policy of invading every type of community, and interviewing young people from all social and economic levels resulted in our visiting prosperous as well as impoverished neighborhoods. It is quite natural therefore that we interviewed many young people who had the feeling that opportunities for recreation in their communities were quite adequate.

Yet even in certain less prosperous areas, youth were interviewed who believed that the recreational resources of their neighborhoods left almost nothing to be

desired. In some cases this opinion was due to the special advantages the respondent enjoyed on account of the high economic status of his family. In other cases, it was due to the apathy, docility, and unimaginativeness which caused many youth to accept, uncritically, the recreational resources of their communities as they were, and to prevent them from envisioning any possibilities of improvement.

DO COMMUNITIES HAVE ADEQUATE RECREATIONAL PROGRAMS?

Table 76 presents an analysis of the youth's evaluation of the recreational resources of his community.

TABLE 76—EXTENT TO WHICH YOUTH THOUGHT COMMUNITY RECREATION WAS ADEQUATE OR INADEQUATE

Classification of youth	Percentage of each group			Total	Number of youth
	Program inadequate	Program adequate	Attitude uncertain		
All youth.....	69.2	19.7	11.1	100.0	13,528
Male white.....	67.4	22.6	10.0	100.0	5,819
Female white.....	69.6	20.8	9.6	100.0	5,622
Male Negro.....	72.4	6.7	20.9	100.0	1,070
Female Negro.....	74.8	10.5	14.7	100.0	1,017
16-year-olds.....	74.0	19.1	6.9	100.0	1,514
18-year-olds.....	73.4	18.4	8.2	100.0	1,483
20-year-olds.....	68.6	20.7	10.7	100.0	1,643
22-year-olds.....	66.2	20.0	13.8	100.0	1,401
24-year-olds.....	65.4	18.9	15.7	100.0	1,546
Farm.....	59.2	16.9	23.9	100.0	2,846
Village.....	79.3	9.1	11.6	100.0	3,059
Town.....	80.9	11.6	7.5	100.0	1,587
City.....	65.8	28.6	5.6	100.0	6,019

For the group as a whole, seven out of every ten young people felt that they were living in communities with inadequate recreational programs. About two out of ten considered their community's recreational resources adequate, while the remaining one in ten didn't know if they were adequate or not.

Supporting a point discussed in a preceding section, the least satisfaction was found among youth living in villages. Less than 10 per cent (9.1) of these young people were of the opinion that the communities in which they lived offered recreational opportunities that could be regarded as adequate. This can doubtless be accepted as one of the reasons why three-fourths of them wanted to leave.

The highest degree of satisfaction was found among city youth. Even so, less than 30 per cent (28.6) of these felt that the recreational programs of their various

neighborhoods were adequate. The satisfaction of many of these was more the result of their ability to pay for various types of commercial recreation, than of their participation in any public recreational program.

The conclusion which these data force upon us is that most young people are painfully aware of the poverty of recreational resources of the communities in which they live. If there were any such thing as an enlightened and aggressive group consciousness among young people generally, the situation would seem more hopeful. Here and there an observer will discover a few youth who have banded together and decided to do for themselves what their community fathers have not seen fit to do for them. They will hire a barn or a vacant store and start a "community center" of their own.

An example of this somewhat rare initiative is suggested by a report made by an urban interviewer.

Thirty-five members already belong to this "neighborhood house." They opened it to keep off the streets. Primarily it is a social club in a rented store. It has some furniture of a rather rough and second-hand quality. The youth come in, sit down, talk, and listen to a radio. They are trying to increase membership. Later on they will give a dance, or a "moonlight" on the bay. The club is only two weeks old. Dues are 15 cents a week. They had \$65.00 when they first started. So far they have spent about \$50.00 on furniture and fixtures. The membership is largely Jewish and Italian.

HOW YOUTH WOULD IMPROVE COMMUNITY RECREATIONAL PROGRAMS

Generally speaking, young people choose to make the best of whatever a community has to offer them and let it go at that. If no opportunities for the more social types of recreation are provided, they take the next best thing. That the recreational activities they prefer are more "social" in nature than the activities in which they actually indulge is revealed by the spontaneous suggestions they made as to how their communities could best improve their recreational programs.

Of the 13,500 youth interviewed, almost 9,500 felt that the recreational resources of their communities were inadequate. These 9,500 were asked what they should most like to see their communities add to their recreational programs. It will be seen that almost half this group (48.1 per cent) specified parks, playgrounds, or community centers. Large numbers expressed a preference for such other social activities as supervised dancing, clubs, literary and other cultural centers. A few desired more adequate supervision, and many (15.9 per cent) specified swimming pools.

To find any general agreement, among adults, as to "what is good" for young people would probably be a rather difficult task. Sheer logic, however, will drive most of us to the admission that youth, in spite of all the limitations that immaturity

imposes upon them, have a fairly definite idea about what, to them, constitutes a "good time."

It seems to us that much can be gained by a careful consideration of the types of recreation young people would like to see their communities provide for them. Whether recreation is regarded as a sponge for potentially antisocial behavior, or whether it is accepted as a constructive type of social therapy, the fact still stands that recreational facilities and programs which are not used are a loss to everyone concerned.

TABLE 77—SPECIFIC RECREATIONAL NEEDS OF THE COMMUNITY AS INDICATED BY THE YOUTH BELIEVING RECREATION INADEQUATE

Suggested need	All youth	Percentage of each youth group					
		Race		Residence*			
		White	Negro	Farm	Village	Town	City
Parks, playgrounds.....	27.8	28.7	23.0	14.7	22.6	22.5	38.4
Community centers.....	20.3	19.6	23.6	18.7	22.0	24.5	18.5
Swimming pools.....	15.9	17.8	6.3	8.2	18.6	24.5	14.7
Movies.....	10.5	8.8	19.0	16.3	10.6	6.6	9.1
Cultural, educational.....	5.7	5.2	8.3	8.8	7.4	3.8	3.9
Dance halls.....	5.0	4.8	6.5	6.0	4.1	3.3	5.8
Clubs.....	4.4	4.7	2.6	7.1	5.4	4.3	2.7
More supervision.....	3.8	4.1	2.5	3.8	3.2	4.8	3.8
Other and not stated.....	6.6	6.3	8.2	16.4	6.1	5.7	3.1
Total.....	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0
Number of youth.....	9,369	7,833	1,536	1,686	2,426	1,284	3,961

* The residence of 12 youth who made suggestions was not known.

Young people appear to have grown weary with playing solitaire. They want more group activity. In view of the wholesome social values of group play, this demand should be interpreted as a fortunate thing. Many private and public agencies are providing the youth of some neighborhoods with the rare sort of recreation that is both constructive and satisfying. But there is not enough, and what exists is seldom found in the areas where it is needed most.

One urban neighborhood that was studied with particular care was found to be unusually fortunate in having a branch library, a free clinic, a fine gymnasium, and a public park, all grouped around the public school. These buildings constitute the core of the community's cultural and recreational life.

Yet, despite the availability of these recreational services, interviewers listened to constant and persistent requests, on the part of the youth of the community, for "more social and sports centers."

We suspect that you have in this case a paradox that is far from uncommon among the communities of America. Whatever the degree of justification may be, young people are convinced that the recreational programs of many centers are adjusted to the interests and tastes of adults. One 18-year-old single girl, when asked why she failed to participate in the recreational activities of this community center, indicated that she believed that it might better be described as a "reducing center." "Who," she said, "wants to go up to the gym and see a lot of fat old married women doing calisthenics!"

How large numbers of young people react to the "recreational programs" of their communities, and the wide variety of their suggestions as to what should be done, is reflected by the following comments.

"Cops should not run us away from wharves when it's the only place we can swim."

"What we need is a playground where the cops won't chase us away."

"Everything you do cost money. There should be a community gymnasium."

"We all dance and the only place to go is some of these saloons. They are no place for girls."

"Make a playground of the vacant lot at the corner."

"They have school grounds right across from us, but they won't let us play there."

"Can't play in the streets . . . won't allow us to play in school yard . . . police run us out every time."

"Public park or recreational grounds; more places like the 'Y' owned by the city."

"You can't play in the streets with other girls after you are married. It makes too much talk."

"We need a well-equipped gymnasium to compete with night clubs."

"Playground . . . kids here have no place to play except the streets, and the cops get you for that."

"Something amusing that would get young people together—like a club. We don't even know some of our neighbors, and there's nothing going on to get us acquainted."

"Recreational centers. There are not enough of them in the slums. I believe the leaders are afraid to go down into those districts."

"Place where young people could go and dance where they don't sell beer."

"They should turn a lot of rabbits loose to hunt."

"I heard of a place where the school board had to choose between a gilded dome for the school, and a swimming pool. They chose the dome. I think that was criminal."

"There's no recreation around here for young people. All there is to do is sit in the drugstore and smoke. That's no recreation."

OPPORTUNITIES FOR SOCIAL RELATIONS BETWEEN YOUNG MEN AND WOMEN

Along with the effort to discover what young people had to say about the most desirable and effective ways of developing community recreational programs, the interviewer asked each subject what he thought the community might do to provide

more desirable ways of meeting persons of the opposite sex and generally to improve the social relations between young men and women. Here again, emphasis was placed upon the need for community centers, social clubs, supervised dancing, and other types of social recreation. The following table reveals what they thought their communities should do.

TABLE 78—OPPORTUNITIES WHICH COMMUNITY SHOULD PROVIDE FOR YOUTH TO MEET PERSONS OF THE OPPOSITE SEX

Suggestion	Percentage of youth giving definite suggestion
Community centers; indoor facilities.....	33.5
Social clubs and organizations.....	29.3
Supervised recreation.....	12.9
Community dances.....	11.6
Outdoor recreational facilities.....	4.8
Athletic and other clubs not strictly social.....	4.4
Community parties, picnics, get-togethers.....	3.5
Youth offering specific suggestions.....	100.0

It will be seen that almost two-thirds (62.8 per cent) of the youth who made suggestions specified community centers or social clubs. Almost a fourth (24.5 per cent) specified supervised recreation and community dances. This would seem to reflect their awareness of the lack of trained supervision, along with their dissatisfaction with the kind of entertainment offered by movies, commercial roadhouses, night clubs, and cabarets.

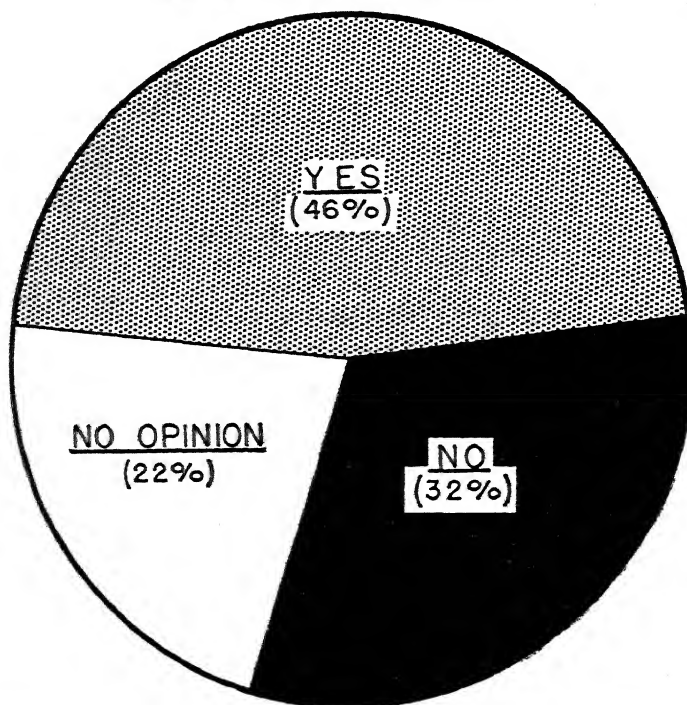
CAN COMMUNITY ACTION REDUCE JUVENILE DELINQUENCY?

It should be reasonably clear, by this time, that youth, despite their immaturity, have constructive as well as destructive criticisms to offer. They not only sense the inadequacy of the recreational resources of their communities, but they have some pretty definite ideas as to the specific resources that are needed most.

In questions previously discussed, young people were thinking of the positive values of recreation. They were thinking about the specific steps communities might take which would lead to the enrichment of their social lives. In another question, they were asked to state what their communities could do to absorb time and energies that might otherwise find outlets in delinquent behavior. As put to them, the question was: Do you think there is anything your community could do to keep young people out of trouble? It is significant that here, too, the emphasis was placed upon the value and importance of more effective recreational programs.

Somewhat less than half (46 per cent) of the youth who answered this question were optimistic. They felt that there were things their communities might do. A little over a fifth (22 per cent) had no ideas on the subject, while slightly less than a third (32 per cent) said they could think of nothing new that might be done by the community to diminish delinquency among youth.

FIGURE 17
CAN YOUR COMMUNITY DO ANYTHING TO KEEP YOUNG
PEOPLE OUT OF TROUBLE?



Over 6,000 youth had more or less definite ideas as to the action their communities should take to reduce juvenile delinquency. More than six out of every ten of these young people specified various types of recreational activities. About one out of ten demanded more rigid restriction of the sale of liquor. A few (5.1 per cent) believed that the solution called for more effective law enforcement and a general improvement of juvenile court procedure.

However satisfied we adults may be with the adequacy and the effectiveness of the recreational programs that communities offer their youth, it should be abundantly clear by now that large numbers of young people find themselves unable to share our somewhat complacent point of view.

TABLE 79—WHAT COMMUNITIES MIGHT DO TO KEEP YOUNG PEOPLE OUT OF TROUBLE

Suggestion	Percentage of youth offering suggestions	Number of youth
Provide recreational facilities.....	48.3	3,000
Provide supervised recreation.....	12.9	801
Restrict sale of liquor.....	10.1	627
Enforce laws, improve legal methods.....	5.1	317
Provide education for youth or parents.....	4.8	297
Provide employment.....	4.1	251
Keep young persons busy.....	2.7	170
Create better economic conditions.....	1.3	81
Community should do <i>something</i>	10.7	662
Total.....	100.0	6,206

In a preceding section, we introduced some testimony from young people on the question of how they were spending their leisure time. From the direct quotations which follow, we may get a clearer idea about what youth consider to be the recreational needs of the communities in which they live.

"Give them [youth] a recreation hall to keep their minds off truck. Keep them in school as long as possible and then either get them a job or make a place where they can go and play, or do *anything* that would keep them off the street and out of trouble."

"Have community halls where the young people can go, dance, play cards, or do the things they desire. When the community halls are built, then do away with the roadhouse. It will not do any good to close the roadhouse until the community provides something else to take its place . . ."

"Provide more entertainment, so they won't sit around and study up meanness."

"Recreation centers. The thing that helps young people most to go straight is the feeling that some organization or group of people is interested in them. Young people need something to tie to."

"Recreation centers. Something to keep them out of meanness. The way it is here, they haven't anything to do."

"Yes, let us have nice dances instead of going to beer halls."

"Clubs with regular fellows at the head so youth would want to belong."

"Something to bring young people together. There are so many small churches in the country and each has its own little bunch of young people. None are able to put on programs and sports. If they would combine their efforts, it would be worthwhile." (Solution offered by the 20-year-old daughter of a farmer.)

"Clubs and sports for young men to keep their minds off temptations and out of joints. If you keep them out of saloons, you can keep them out of anything."

"Sports center and social center. Centers where people can get together. Loneliness can do some terrible things to you."

"Keep the price down on recreation. Nice dances cost too much."

"Boys' and girls' clubs. Direct interests in other channels that would be just as interesting as crime."

"Boys' centers like they have in Chicago—run by the boys themselves."

"They should be made to hang off corners. The boys should be put to work to turn empty lots into football fields and things."

"Stop youth drinking, going to cabarets, and smoking dope."

"Stop showing gangster movies."

Here are a few pessimistic notes sounded by the relatively small number of young people who were convinced their communities could do nothing to reduce delinquent behavior.

"When they're born bad, they go bad."

"They'd get into trouble whatever you did."

"You can't tell no one what to do."

"You have to take the thorns with the roses."

"If it's in 'em, it's in 'em."

"Not a God's thing. More you talk to them, the worse they get."

SUMMARY

Probably the most significant revelation that has come out of this analysis is the need, and the demand, for various types of social recreation. That the need exists is unfortunate, but the demand can well be accepted as a source of satisfaction by those who are concerned with the development of more effective and comprehensive programs for young people.

A careful consideration of these findings has forced upon us the conviction that communities would do well to explore the possibilities of community youth centers. Such organizations could be initiated as recreation centers, and could, in time, be expanded to meet other phases of the youth problem.

There is considerable evidence to suggest that once youth become conscious of the fact that an organization exists in their community which is dedicated to the single purpose of meeting their needs, the basic problem of reaching them will have been solved. The people who are responsible for the development of the recreational programs of these centers should build upon what is known about what young people want. This general enthusiasm for social recreation is a force that should not be suppressed. It should rather be directed into channels that are as beneficial to the social life of a community as they are satisfying to the youth themselves.

Once a youth center has established itself as a source of satisfying recreation to the young people in a community, and, without stooping to the level of a glorified roadhouse, has generated sufficient power to hold its youth, the time to expand its activities will have arrived. The first step in this expansion might well be to develop, within the framework of the center, what might be known as a vocational clinic.

Adequately staffed with trained workers, the chief concern of this clinic would be the problems of the great majority of young people who are out of school. Its

special interests would be the problems of the unemployed and the vocationally mal-adjusted. Its general character would be that of an advisory council, its techniques that of an informal, but no less efficient, case work agency.

The primary purposes of this clinic would be guidance and placement. Its function would be to place young people where they belong. To some, this would involve placement on available jobs. To others, it would mean placement in a vocational school for further training. To all, it would mean sympathetic and realistic guidance, and its total effect would be to cultivate a more general feeling among youth that they have a place in our social and economic scheme of things.

There are doubtless many sympathetic and socially minded people to whom this proposal to develop community youth centers will seem to involve an expense that cannot be met. About the only answer to this is the promise that such a center would, in all probability, yield an ultimate return to the community which would quite surpass its cost. It is quite possible that a satisfactory policy of financial participation among local, state, and federal agencies could be worked out. It is also possible that such centers could be made to pay a substantial part of their way. All of this would, of course, have unfortunate consequences for at least some of the operators of pool halls, roadhouses, cabarets, and "pinball joints." But the rest of the community would stand to gain.

There are many cities in the United States that are well known for the beauty and the cost of the monuments they have built in memory of their heroic dead. While one is impressed, there come times when one wonders if an honest expression of gratitude and appreciation really needs so many blocks of stone. In these unguarded moments, one is led, in fact, to wonder if it is not as noble to serve the living as honor the dead. In fact, one is led to suspect that perhaps the most effective way to honor the dead is to erect monuments that most effectively serve the living. It is quite possible that no better choice for such a monument could be made than a community center dedicated to the single task of directing into profitable channels the years and energies of our young people that are now going to waste.

CHAPTER 6

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Y O U T H A N D T H E C H U R C H



TO ARRIVE at sound conclusions as to the part the church is playing in the lives of young people is not a simple task. The obvious difficulties are aggravated by the fact that it is impossible to isolate the church as a single factor in a youth's experience and background. It is quite possible, of course, to discover the conditions under which the youth of different church groups are living, and also to find out whatever differences may exist in the ways they react to current problems. However, to presume to measure the extent to which these differences are due to dissimilarities in religious backgrounds and affiliations is not only unscientific but highly dangerous.

It is one thing to suggest that certain variations in conditions and attitudes are *associated* with such religious groups as Protestants, Catholics, and Jews, but quite another thing to insist that these dissimilarities are directly the result of different church affiliations. For example, almost 20 per cent of the youth from Protestant homes were Negroes. Thus, what may appear on the surface to be a distinctly religious factor turns out to be influenced by the factor of race. Either the mother or the father, or both, of 35 per cent of the youth from Catholic homes were foreign born. This means, of course, that ethnic, as well as religious, backgrounds contribute to whatever differences may appear in the Catholic and non-Catholic groups. Similarly the attitudes and the conditions of the Jewish youth are, without doubt, considerably influenced by the facts that 84 per cent of their parents were foreign born (over half of them from Russia) and that their median grade attainment was about two grades higher than that of the youth in any other religious group.

Thus it is that differences which, on the surface, may appear to be basically religious in character are, in fact, profoundly affected by such factors as race, nationality, locality of residence, and educational attainment. As it is impossible to dissociate completely the youth's religious background from all these other factors, it will be well, therefore, to interpret the variations about to be disclosed as related to, rather than caused by, differences in church affiliations.

THE CHURCH AFFILIATION OF THE YOUTH'S PARENTS

A logical place to begin this presentation of the youth's relation to the church is to indicate the extent to which they came from the homes of various religious affiliations.

It will be seen from Table 80 that almost two-thirds of the youth (65.8 per cent) were from Protestant homes. Slightly less than one-fifth (18.6 per cent) were from Catholic homes; less than a tenth (8.5 per cent) were children of parents of

mixed religious affiliations; only 3.6 per cent had Jewish parents; and the parents of 2.5 per cent had no church affiliation whatever.

TABLE 80—CHURCH AFFILIATION OF THE YOUTH'S PARENTS
BY RACE

Church affiliation of parents	Percentage of each group			All youth
	All youth	White youth	Negro youth	
Protestant.....	65.8	63.0	81.7	8,908
Catholic.....	18.6	20.4	8.8	2,511
Mixed affiliations*.....	8.5	8.8	6.6	1,147
Jewish.....	3.6	4.3	—	490
No affiliation.....	2.5	2.7	1.2	340
Other and no report.....	1.0	0.8	1.7	132
Total.....	100.0	100.0	100.0	13,528

* Combinations of Protestant, Catholic, Jewish, none.

RACE AND NATIVITY OF PARENTS WITH DIFFERENT CHURCH AFFILIATIONS

Reference has already been made to the dissimilarities in the racial and national backgrounds of the various church groups. These differences are indicated in the table which follows.

TABLE 81—RACE AND BIRTHPLACE OF PARENTS OF DIFFERENT
RELIGIOUS GROUPS

Church affiliation of parents	Percentage of youth with			
	White parents	Negro parents	Native- born parents	Foreign or mixed parents
Protestant.....	80.8	19.2	95.9	4.1
Mixed affiliations.....	88.0	12.0	93.1	6.9
None.....	92.3	7.7	91.6	8.4
Catholic.....	92.7	7.3	64.9	35.1
Jewish.....	100.0	—	16.4	83.6
Total.....	84.6	15.4	86.9	13.1
Number of youth....	11,315	2,052	11,581	1,753

The term "foreign or mixed" parentage was used by the interviewer to indicate that one or both of the youth's parents had been born outside the boundaries of the United States. So interpreted, our data reveal that the proportion of foreign-born

parents of Catholic youth was more than eight times greater than that of Protestant youth (35.1 per cent as against 4.1 per cent). They also indicate that the proportion of Jewish youth with foreign-born parents is about twenty times as large as that of the youth from Protestant homes.

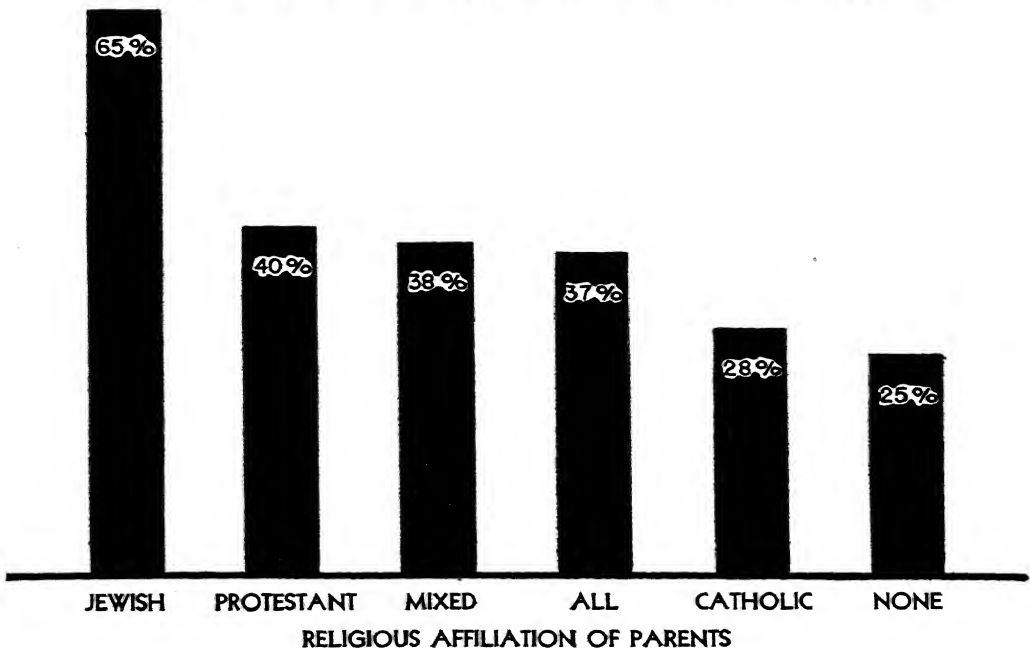
RELATION OF FATHER'S OCCUPATION TO CHURCH AFFILIATION

A slightly larger proportion of Protestant fathers in the lower occupational fields is partly the result of the fact that 20 per cent of the Protestant parents were Negroes, a large number of whom were farm laborers. That so few of the fathers of Jewish youth were in the lower income occupations is partly due to the fact that more than half of them (50.5 per cent) were engaged in some business or enterprise of their own.

FIGURE 18

HOW RELIGION OF PARENTS IS RELATED TO HIGH SCHOOL GRADUATION OF YOUTH

(PERCENTAGE OF YOUTH IN EACH RELIGIOUS GROUP WHO GRADUATED FROM HIGH SCHOOL)



RELATION OF PARENTS' RELIGION TO YOUTH'S GRADE ATTAINMENT

The rather marked variation in the school achievement of youth coming from homes of the different religious backgrounds is suggested by a comparison of the percentages who had completed high school.

Almost two-thirds of the youth from Jewish homes (65 per cent) had completed high school or its equivalent. The smallest proportion was found among the youth whose parents had no church affiliation.

THE CHURCH AFFILIATION OF THE YOUTH

YOUTH ACCEPT THE FAITH OF THEIR PARENTS

It is of considerable interest to note the extent to which youth from homes of different religious backgrounds tend to accept the religion of their parents.

Over four-fifths (81.1 per cent) of the youth with some church affiliation had adopted the faith (Protestant, Catholic, or Jewish) of both their parents. When both parents had church affiliations, but when there was a difference between the persuasion of the father and mother, there was more than twice as strong a tendency to accept the faith of the mother. The proportion of youth who had adopted a belief different from that of either parent is quite negligible—4.2 per cent for the Catholic youth, 2 per cent for the Protestants, and none for the Jewish.

EXTENT OF CHURCH MEMBERSHIP AMONG YOUTH

The matter of what constitutes "church membership" is often a vague and nebulous thing. Many persons who haven't seen the interior of a church for years seriously regard themselves as "church members." Claims of membership are often based upon reasons that vary from an active and continuous participation in church affairs to the mere signing of a church roster. Any use therefore of this extent of professed church membership as a yardstick with which to measure the influence of the church in the lives of young people is obviously dangerous.

The percentages in Table 82 should be interpreted as indicating the extent to which the youth, whose parents were of specified church affiliations, regarded themselves as members of some church.

TABLE 82—CHURCH MEMBERSHIP OF YOUTH

Church affiliation of youth's parents	Percentage of youth who are members of some church	Number of youth who are members
Catholic.....	92.7	2,329
Protestant.....	69.0	6,139
Mixed.....	66.9	765
Jewish.....	62.0	304
None.....	22.6	77
All youth.....	71.0	9,614

When the youth from the homes of all the groups above are considered together, it appears that seven out of every ten (71 per cent) regarded themselves as members of some church. The degree of membership was found to be highest among the youth from Catholic homes, and lowest among the youth whose parents had no church affiliation.

RELATION OF AREA TO CHURCH MEMBERSHIP

Like so many activities previously considered, the matter of church membership seems closely related to the population density of the various areas. Table 83 indicates that church membership becomes more general as the population of the area increases. This can hardly be taken to mean that there is something peculiarly devout among the

TABLE 83—CHURCH MEMBERSHIP OF YOUTH ACCORDING TO LOCALITY OF RESIDENCE

Locality of residence	Percentage who considered themselves members	Number who considered themselves members
Farm.....	59.2	1,680
Village.....	64.7	1,974
Town.....	74.4	1,179
City.....	80.2	4,824

young people living in cities, and something peculiarly otherwise among the youth living on farms. The smaller proportion of farm youth who said they were members of some church may quite possibly reflect the comparative inaccessibility of churches in certain rural areas. Moreover, the 80.2 per cent of church membership of youth living in cities also reflects the fact that most of the religious group with the highest degree of membership, that is, the Catholics, were city youth.

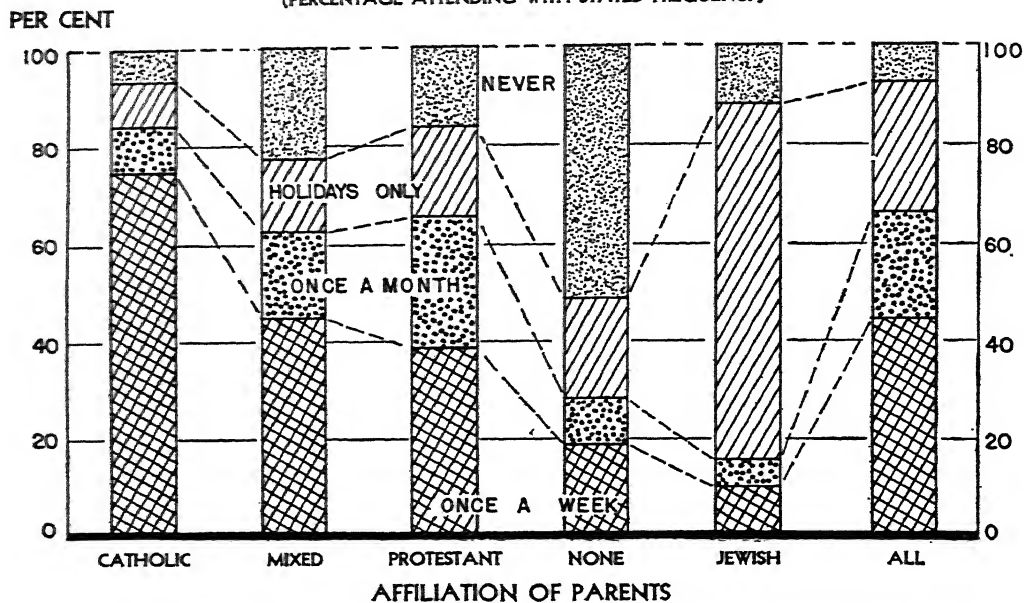
CHURCH ATTENDANCE

Quite as important as the matter of professed membership is that of attendance. As every minister knows, it is one thing to "belong" to a church, and quite another thing to attend its services regularly. Figure 19 reflects the extent to which all youth, and the youth from homes of the different affiliations, stated that they went to church during the year preceding the interview.

The 44.5 per cent who asserted that they had gone to church an average of once a week seems rather high. This general percentage was raised by the 75 per cent of the youth from Catholic homes who stated that they attended church once a week, and lowered by the 10 per cent of the Jewish youth who made the same assertion. The pro-

portion who had not gone once during the preceding year was least among Catholics and greatest among the youth of no church affiliation.

FIGURE 19
HOW OFTEN DO YOUTH ATTEND CHURCH?
(PERCENTAGE ATTENDING WITH STATED FREQUENCY)



RELATION OF SEX AND MARITAL STATUS TO CHURCH ATTENDANCE

Both sex and marital status seem to affect the church attendance of young people. Generally speaking, girls seem to be more constant churchgoers than boys, and single youth more constant than youth who are married.

TABLE 84—RELATION OF SEX AND MARITAL STATUS TO CHURCH ATTENDANCE

Church attendance during preceding year	Male		Female	
	Single	Married	Single	Married
Once a week.....	43.5	22.9	56.7	31.1
Occasionally.....	40.3	54.0	33.9	46.1
Never.....	16.2	23.1	9.4	22.8

The difference in the degree of church attendance by married and single youth probably reflects nothing more significant than the fact that youth who are married are usually more absorbed in home duties than youth who are not.

GOING TO CHURCH- THOSE WHO DO AND THOSE WHO DON'T

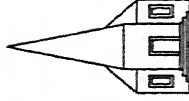
ONCE A WEEK

NEVER

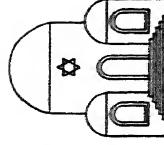
CATHOLIC



PROTESTANT



JEW



EACH FIGURE REPRESENTS 4% OF THE BOYS AND GIRLS OF EACH RELIGIOUS GROUP

ATTITUDES IN RELATION TO RELIGIOUS BACKGROUNDS

In considering the attitudes revealed by the responses of young people of different church affiliations, it is important to bear in mind the fact that a youth's religious background cannot be isolated as a single factor in his total experience. We have already pointed out that whatever differences may appear in the responses of youth in the various religious groups should be interpreted as being associated with, rather than caused by, any differences in religious training.

In the following chapter, we will discuss in greater detail the attitudes of young people toward certain of our social, economic, and governmental problems. It will suffice here to call attention to a few of the salient differences that appear in the attitudes of young people in the various religious groups.

SEX EDUCATION

Data have already been submitted in Table 27 (page 90) on the manner in which youth with different church backgrounds react to the idea of teaching sex education in schools. Those who were most opposed were the youth from Catholic homes (26.3 per cent) and the youth whose parents were not affiliated with any church (26.2 per cent). Those who were most in favor came from Jewish homes, only 15.5 per cent of whom believed that sex education should not be made a part of the regular school program.

A previous analysis of the responses to this matter of sex education revealed a close relationship between a negative response and a relatively low grade attainment. The religious groups with the lowest median grade attainment were those from Catholic homes and from the homes where there was no church affiliation. The group with the highest median grade attainment was the Jewish. Thus the factor of educational, as well as religious, background probably operated to color the responses to this question.

DRINKING

The youth from Catholic and Jewish homes, who were at the two extremes of opinion with respect to sex education, are the two groups that are most nearly of the *same* opinion on the subject of drinking alcoholic beverages. Only negligible numbers from each group were opposed—8.8 per cent of the Catholic and 6.3 per cent of the Jewish. On the other hand, the largest proportion of those generally opposed to the consumption of any alcoholic beverages were the children of Protestant parents. The nonreligious factor that is probably operating here is not grade attainment, but locality of residence. It will later be seen that there was a somewhat more general

opposition to drinking among youth in rural than in urban areas. The great majority of both the Catholic and the Jewish youth were found in urban communities. Thus their opinions about drinking may reflect a kind of community, as well as a more definitely religious, point of view.

"IDEAL" NUMBER OF CHILDREN

The youth from the homes of all religious groups expressed a desire for fewer children than their parents had. The greatest difference between the number of children in the parental family and the number of children the youth considered "ideal" was found among the children of Catholic parents. The Catholic youth wanted but slightly more than half the number of children their parents had. The smallest difference between the size of the youth's parental family and the number desired was found among the Jewish youth. The median size of their parental family was 4.1, while the median number of children they desired was exactly 3.

GOING TO WAR

Here again the youth from Catholic and Jewish groups assumed the extreme positions. About twice as large a percentage of Jewish youth stated that they would refuse to go to war as Catholic youth (28.9 per cent as against 14.3 per cent). Moreover, the smallest proportion of "immediate enlistments" was found among the Jewish youth, and the largest among Catholics. As our data reflect a close relationship between high educational level and the refusal to take up arms, it is quite probable that the responses of the Jewish youth, with their relatively high median grade attainment, were influenced by the difference in their educational, as well as religious, backgrounds.

WHAT IS THE FUNCTION OF THE CHURCH?

The fact that the great majority of young people regard the church as basically a spiritual institution is rather definitely revealed by their answers to the following question: How often should sermons deal with current governmental and economic problems?

Six young people out of every ten expressed the belief that sermons should never, under any circumstances, deal with economic and governmental problems. This conviction was found to be most general among the youth from Catholic homes (70.5 per cent), and least general among the children of Jewish parents (51.3 per cent).

When one considers the minority who believed that sermons should, under some circumstances, deal with governmental and economic matters, one discovers that about half of these were convinced that such sermons should be limited to times of

crisis only. Less than one in six felt that ministers should discuss such problems once a month, while only one in twenty believed that such discussions should emanate from the pulpit every week.

The evidence seems to be quite convincing that, in the minds of the great majority of young people, the church is one institution and the public forum is definitely something else. The church quite clearly retains its original and historical character as a place of worship.

TABLE 85—FREQUENCY WITH WHICH SERMONS SHOULD DEAL WITH POLITICAL AND ECONOMIC PROBLEMS

Religious affiliation of parents	Percentage of each group specifying					Total
	Never	Times of crisis	Once a month	Every week	Other times	
Catholic.....	70.5	14.1	9.4	5.2	0.8	100.0
No affiliation.....	67.4	13.6	11.2	5.0	2.8	100.0
Mixed affiliations.....	64.8	17.4	12.9	3.5	1.4	100.0
Protestant.....	56.8	20.1	17.3	4.0	1.8	100.0
Jewish.....	51.3	14.6	16.5	16.1	1.5	100.0
All youth.....	60.2	18.3	15.2	4.7	1.6	100.0

With their usual directness, the spontaneous comments of youth show how they feel about the use of the pulpit as a public forum.

"Governmental problems should never be mixed with religion."

"Preachers don't know enough about such things to talk about them."

"The sermon's long enough as it is."

"Church service should be solemn and sacred, not talking about law."

"You can hear enough of that on the radio."

"They're supposed to be preaching about the Lord."

"There are plenty of other places to talk about those things."

"It's all right to pray about these things, but not to preach about them."

"Church should be spiritual."

"I want to forget such problems in church."

"The church is for religion."

"— should be a politician, not a priest."

"A man who is a good church member doesn't have much to do with politics."

"I know of one preacher who talks about such things. I would never let him marry me. I wouldn't feel married."

The few who believed that sermons should occasionally deal with other than scriptural or religious subjects spoke with equal directness.

"This old idea of Hell and Damnation gets tiresome."

"I think it would be nice to break the monotony."

"It depends entirely upon the minister. If he is unbiased, his talks on such problems should be useful."

"Should not preach on politics, but it would help if they preached on things of *this* life instead of the next."

"If they talked about more things like this, more people would go to church."

"As often as possible. They do more good for you than all this talk about souls."

"I'd much rather have sermons on current events than the same old Five Books of Moses."

THE CHURCH AS A RECREATIONAL CENTER

Besides discovering the extent of professed church membership and attendance, an effort was also made to find out if youth were participating in any of the recreational programs of the church. As used by the interviewers, the term "recreational program," as applied to the church, was an extremely liberal one. Any church, in fact, that gave occasional socials, bazaars, or picnics, and any church that had a club or young people's society, was considered as having a recreational program.

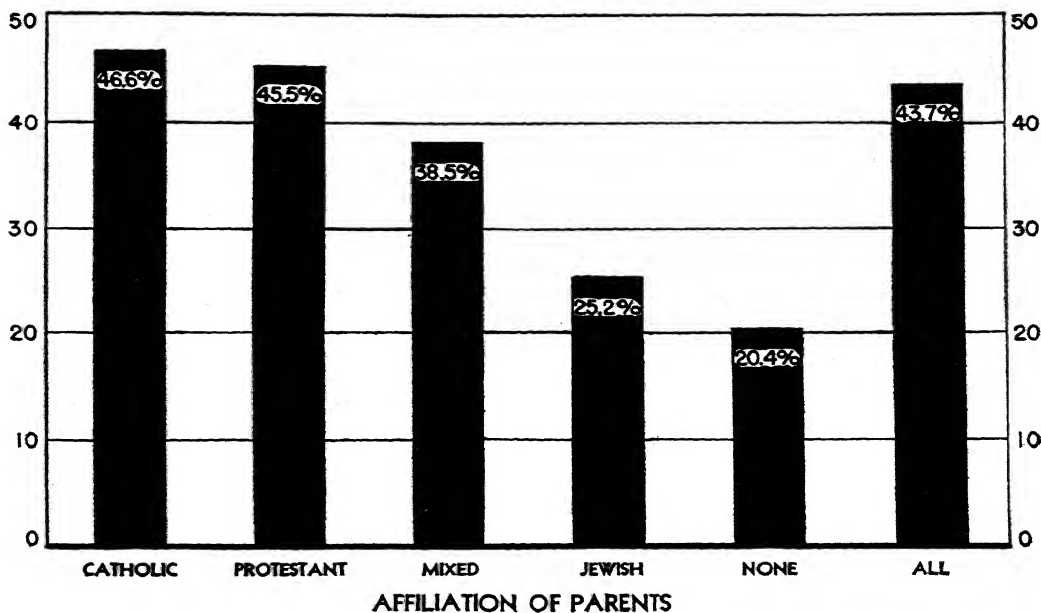
Figure 20 indicates the extent to which young people of the various religious groups participated in some phase of the recreational program of *any* church.

FIGURE 20

HOW MUCH DID YOUTH PARTICIPATE IN CHURCH RECREATIONAL PROGRAMS?

(DURING 12 MONTHS PRECEDING INTERVIEW)

PER CENT PARTICIPATING



It will be seen that, in every religious group, less than half the youth participated in any phase of the recreational activities provided by any church. Considering all the youth together, only 43.7 per cent reported some participation.

One of the outstanding impressions we got from the analysis of our data on recreation was that the recreational needs of most communities are not being met by existing agencies. Certainly it is obvious that the church, with its essentially spiritual purpose, is making an almost negligible contribution to the total recreational needs of all the youth in most of our communities. Although many churches could, perhaps, do more than they are now doing toward meeting these needs, it would be at least unreasonable to expect them to develop independently a program that is so clearly the responsibility of the whole community.

At a time when there is an encouraging and increasing interest in the "coordination of agencies," it is perhaps appropriate to point to the fact that, in thousands of American communities, about the only "agencies" which exist are the school and the church. Although nothing may be lost and much may be gained by an effort to bring the recreational activities of these two institutions into a closer and more effective relationship, it is unrealistic to ignore the fact that, in the minds of most youth, neither of these institutions has the distinct character of a recreational center. Many communities—Gary, Indiana, for example—have succeeded in stamping their schools with a recreational as well as an educational character, just as many churches have acquired the character of satisfying centers of community recreation. Even so, the fact still stands that, in the minds of far too many youth, the school is essentially a workhouse, while the church is more or less exclusively a place of worship. Work and worship are not only desirable but necessary to complete personal growth. But only a negligible minority of youth regard either of these activities as basically recreational in character.

It seems to us that any community recreational program, to be genuinely effective, must be centralized in some community center that is definitely and unequivocally stamped with an essentially recreational character. If either the church or the school can be established in the minds of young people as an effective and satisfying recreational center, so much the better. This much is certain: youth must not only *know* their center is a recreational center, but it must offer the kind of recreation that is intelligently adapted to their own interests and tastes. The community youth center, as interpreted in Chapter V, impresses us as an effective answer to a very real need.

SUMMARY

Although it would be unwise, perhaps, to make any general statement about the extent to which the church is affecting the living and the thinking of our young people,

the data we have just analyzed clearly indicate that, for all its alleged decadence as a vital social force, the church still retains a substantial measure of its original appeal. It will be remembered that three-fourths of the youth considered themselves church members. Six out of every seven reported that they had attended services at some time during the preceding year, and about half of this group stated that they were in the habit of going to church once a week.

Even though an actual check of these reports might reveal that church membership and attendance is somewhat less general than our findings indicate, the fact would still stand that the majority of young people want to be identified as church members and like to have it known that they participate in its devotional activities.

In the minds of the great majority of youth, the church is neither a public forum nor a recreational center. It still retains its original character as a place of worship.

CHAPTER 7

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ATTITUDES



IT HAS been our primary purpose, thus far, to study the social and economic conditions under which young people are living. At times, we have set down their evaluations of certain institutions and policies, but, in the main, we have dealt with such tangible things as the wages they received on their jobs and the grades they attained in school. Far less tangible, but, to many observers, quite as important, are the attitudes and opinions young people have on some of the significant issues and problems of our time.

In analyzing the responses that our 13,500 young people have made to the various attitude questions, we do not assume the position of judge or critic. It is our business to report, not to evaluate.

So far as our knowledge goes, in no other study of young people has a similar effort been made to ascertain the apparent relationships between so comprehensive a number of attitudes and facts. This somewhat unusual fusion of an attitude and factual study grew out of the conviction that the real meaning of our attitude responses could be disclosed only when they were studied in relation to the fundamental groups that constitute our youth population.

The procedure of studying responses in relation to basic social groups is, of course, a commonplace of social research. It is a principle that we have observed with what, to some, may have seemed excessive zeal, throughout the analysis of all the factual data already considered.

The social analyst who earns his salt sees himself in the position of an examining doctor—a diagnostician. A patient doesn't go to a diagnostician to be told that he is sick. He is painfully aware of the fact that he is sick. What he wants, and what he has every right to expect, is an analysis of his condition that will tell him, with at least a measure of precision, what and where his trouble is.

We recently heard a distressed person remark, in resounding terms, "There's something wrong with our social order!" This, we suggest, is not news. Most of us realize that there are quite a few things wrong with our social order. We realize that the ills of society are almost as varied and, in some cases, quite as dangerous as any of "the thousand natural shocks that flesh is heir to." What we particularly want is a more definite idea as to what and where these social ills are.

So far as the social analyst is concerned, the task of locating and identifying these "natural shocks" of society consists, among other things, in determining the extent to which they are related to fundamental social and economic groups. We have already seen how such matters as low grade attainment and inadequate wages are related to such basic groups as male-female, relief-nonrelief, and white-Negro.

In precisely the same manner, we shall attempt to analyze the reactions of certain groups of young people to such currently significant issues as the functions of government, the effectiveness of the suffrage, the role of the church, indulgence in alcoholic beverages, the gainful employment of children, and going to war.

WHAT ABOUT WAGES?

At a time when the economic and social life of a nation is so profoundly affected by a general condition of unrest among workers, it seems particularly appropriate for us to give some thought to the effect this unrest is having upon the thinking of the young people of our country, even though, to a large extent, these youth are mere spectators of the dramatic conflict that is going on. In Table 33, we saw that only four out of every ten were employed on full-time jobs. The other six were students, home-makers, part-time workers, or totally unemployed.

ARE WAGES ADEQUATE?

In a previous section, we discussed how employed youth felt about the adequacy, or inadequacy, of the wages they were being paid. We are concerned here with their reactions to wages in general. Table 86 not only indicates the reactions of the total number of youth, but, as with other tables, reveals whatever similarities or differences exist in the responses of various social and economic groups.

Two out of every three young people were convinced that wages, generally, are too low. As indicated by the first column of Table 86, the place of residence seems to be the most potent factor in determining the youth's attitude on wages. Only slightly more than half the farm youth (53.8 per cent) believed that wages, generally, are too low, while almost three-fourths of the youth living in cities (72.4 per cent) were of this opinion. There would seem, in fact, to be a clear-cut relationship between the density of an area's population and the degree of dissatisfaction with which the youth in these areas regard the matter of wages.

However, before we acquire any too definite ideas about the comparative contentment of farm youth with the economic *status quo*, it will be well to recall that, while these youth were the *least* inclined to regard wages in general as too low, they were the *most* inclined to consider their *own* wages as too low. It would appear that, while they might question the need for higher wages for workers in general, they are relatively certain that higher wages are desirable for their own group.

The difference in the degree of dissatisfaction with the *wages actually received* by farm and urban youth is quite understandable when it is recalled that, while the employed farm youth worked an average of 53.9 hours to earn a median weekly wage

WHAT ABOUT WAGES ?

RESPONSES OF MALES

RESPONSES OF FEMALES

TOO LOW



SATISFACTORY



NO OPINION



EACH FIGURE REPRESENTS THE OPINIONS OF 5 % OF EACH SEX GROUP

of \$8.44, the employed youth in cities worked 40.4 hours to earn \$13.82. Here, as with the female clothing operatives (page 128), we have an attitude that clearly springs from a recognition of realities. Even when the supplementary compensation (in the form of board and room) is taken into account, there is a very real difference between the wages received by the farm and city youth, and therefore a very real basis for discontent.

TABLE 86—YOUTH'S EVALUATION OF GENERAL WAGE LEVELS

Classification of youth	Percentage of each youth group			Number of youth
	Wages too low	Wages not too low	Uncertain	
All youth.....	65.7	21.9	12.4	13,528
Male.....	68.3	23.4	8.3	6,889
Female.....	62.8	20.4	16.8	6,639
16-year-olds.....	58.2	26.0	15.8	1,471
18-year-olds.....	67.5	21.7	10.8	1,446
20-year-olds.....	68.7	20.9	10.4	1,600
22-year-olds.....	71.9	18.9	9.2	1,374
24-year-olds.....	72.3	21.7	6.0	1,523
Unemployed.....	69.8	18.2	12.0	2,629
Employed.....	69.3	22.3	8.4	6,272
Homemaker.....	61.5	19.9	18.6	1,746
Student.....	56.1	26.3	17.6	2,620
White.....	64.9	23.3	11.8	11,441
Negro.....	69.8	14.3	15.9	2,087
City.....	72.4	17.3	10.3	6,019
Town.....	68.9	20.1	11.0	1,587
Village.....	61.7	24.7	13.6	3,059
Farm.....	53.8	29.4	16.8	2,846

The dissimilarity in the attitude of farm and city youth toward *wages in general* is not so easily explained. Some may be impelled to interpret it as a symptom of the ancient suspicion and lack of understanding between the country and the town. Others may trace it to the different degree to which youth in rural and urban localities are exposed to the forces that mold and color public opinion. However it may be interpreted, the difference is there.

The youth's age also seems to exert an influence upon his evaluation of the adequacy of wages. The proportion who felt that wages, generally, were too low increased with each successive age, rising from 58 per cent of the 16-year-olds to 72 per cent of the 24-year-olds. It is also worth noting that the proportion of those who reported that they were uncertain, or did not know, progressively decreased with such successive age.

HOW SHOULD WAGES BE RAISED?

Almost 9,000 young people expressed the belief that the wages generally being paid were too low. A little more than 6,000, or 68 per cent, of these had pretty definite notions about the particular means, or agency, by which the level of wages could best be raised. Their opinions are summarized in Table 87.

TABLE 87—MEANS OF RAISING WAGES
SUGGESTED BY YOUTH BELIEVING
THEM TOO LOW

Means suggested	Percentage of youth
Government regulation	39.3
Labor unions	24.3
Individual effort	10.3
New economic system	4.1
Employers' initiative	3.7
Combinations; other means	18.3
Total	100.0
Youth making suggestions	6,027

At the top of the list is governmental regulation. Four out of every ten youth (39.3 per cent) apparently believe that the situation calls for some kind of action on the part of the federal government. About a fourth (24.3 per cent) expressed the opinion that wage levels could best be raised through the agency of labor unions. One youth in ten would fall into the somewhat loosely defined classification of "rugged individualist," who believes that the best way to get better wages is to work harder and produce more. Only four in a hundred believed that the solution calls for a "new economic system," and an even smaller number believed that a solution would come from the concerted action of employers.

At a time when the atmosphere is charged with more or less dire predictions of what the world, and this younger generation, are coming to, this disclosure of what young people would do to raise wages is packed with considerable meaning. One of the outstanding revelations of the responses to this and other attitude questions is what clearly appears to be an increasingly general disposition to look to government for the solution of our economic and social problems. Although only four in every *hundred* suggested that the best way out was to scrap our capitalistic system and start with a "new" one, there were four in every *ten* who wanted so to expand the province of government as to include the power to regulate minimum wages. This, it appears, is exactly what was approved by the United States Senate about a year after the interviews were taken.

Considerably more significant, perhaps, is the relatively small number who expressed a preference for a "new economic system." Although their persistent demand for increasingly large powers of government and their rather cynical attitude toward the effectiveness of the suffrage suggest that youth have a definitely qualified respect for what might be called the "old" or traditional type of democracy, it is clear that they have an even greater suspicion of the various kinds of "isms" that are included in the term "new economic system." It is quite possible, of course, that large numbers of them want new wine in old bottles—they would retain the nomenclature and the outward trappings of democracy and yet dispense with many of the methods and procedures that give democracy its essential character.

In view of the casual acceptance of such venerable American institutions as shipping subsidies, protective tariffs, and free farm lands, it is doubtful logic to assume that this enthusiasm for the participation of government in the raising of wages is altogether opposed to the traditionally American way of doing things. Whatever else these responses may indicate, it is at least clear that a very substantial proportion of our young people look to some kind of governmental action for the solution of their individual economic problems. Those who believed that the boon of higher wages could be won by greater "individual effort" were outnumbered about ten to one.

Probably the most effective way to uncover the essential implications of the opinions of young people on the subject of general wage levels is to let a few of them speak for themselves. It will be remembered that the largest number of youth (40 per cent) expressed the belief that wages could best be raised by some kind of governmental action.

In an earlier section (page 152) we intimated that the great majority of these attitude responses seemed more often to be based upon personal experiences than upon "an enlightened and mature conception of the sphere of government in a modern state."

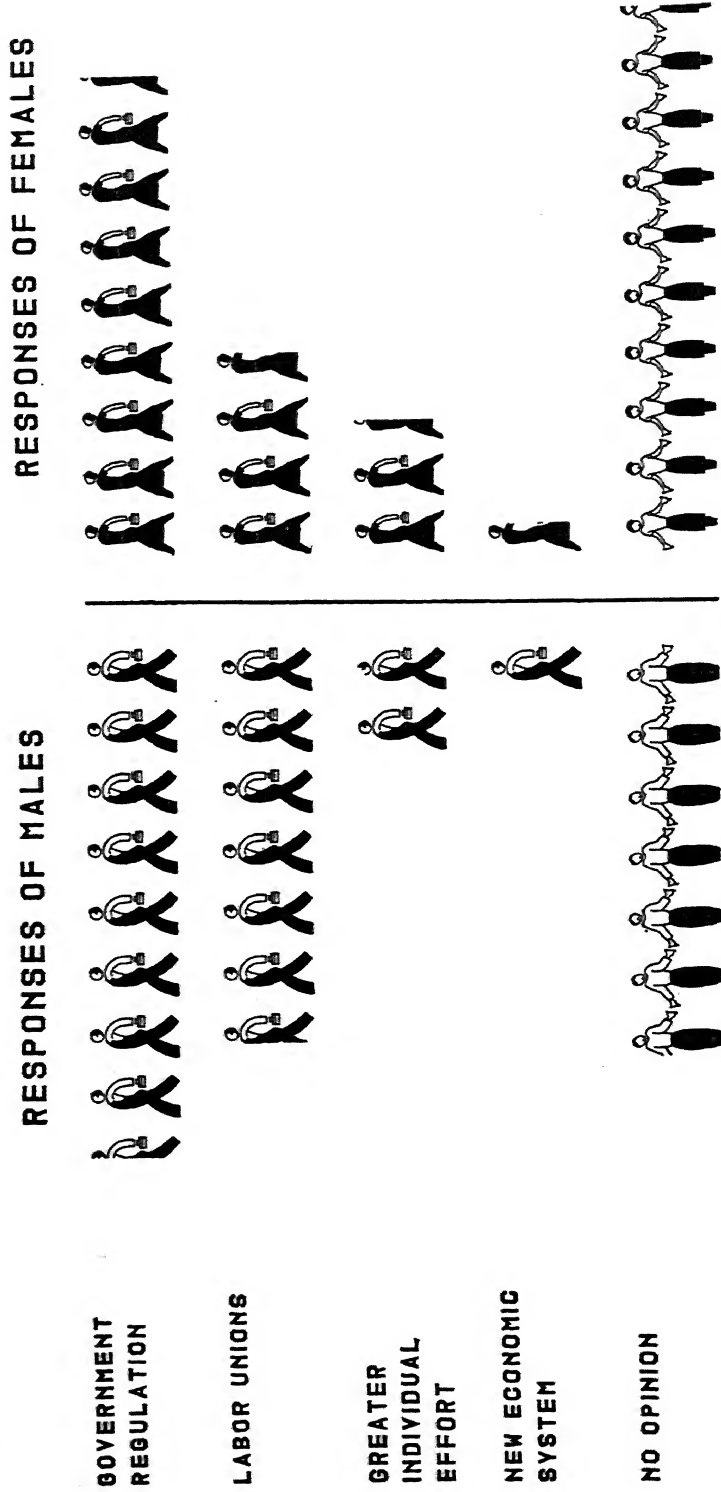
The following comments indicate that the attitudes of young people, like the attitudes of most adults, are far more likely to be based upon their personal experiences than upon any abstract social philosophy.

"The NRA was a good thing, but it's so difficult to enforce something like that. I was working in a factory doing piece work at the time. They're clever and they have ways of getting around things like that. They cut us on the pay per piece in spite of the NRA. I believe in government regulation if it can be enforced."

"The wages in department stores are perfectly terrible . . . you can't live on them. Government regulation should increase."

"The only work I've done was a salesgirl in a department store. It certainly was hard work for a little bit of pay. We should have more government regulation."

IF WAGES ARE TOO LOW,* BY WHAT MEANS. OR AGENCY, CAN THEY BEST BE RAISED ?



* 67% BELIEVED THAT WAGES GENERALLY ARE TOO LOW

EACH FIGURE REPRESENTS THE RESPONSES OF 4% OF EACH SEX GROUP

"Wages are too low. The ideal way to raise wages would be by voluntary action on the part of employers, but that is something we can't expect. People just don't do that; therefore, I believe in government regulation."

"Wages are too low. Something like the NRA is a good thing. I'm sorry it washed out, and I wish it would come back."

"I'm very much underpaid. NRA was perfect. NRA is the answer and salvation for this younger generation."

"Government should regulate all types of wages according to the number of people in the family." (Comment of 17-year-old white girl on NYA project.)

"Wages are high enough except for farm work. Government should set a standard price for crops." (A 17-year-old farm youth.)

"The thing to do is have the government bring costs down. There's no use raising wages if costs go up." (A 20-year-old single youth, employed as a laborer at a wage of \$8.25 for a 48-hour week.)

The next largest group of youth (24 per cent) favored labor unions as the most effective means of raising wages.

"Wages are too low. There should be more labor unions. They [the workers] should all get together and strike."

"Labor unions are the best way to raise wages. My husband gets \$20 a week working 70 to 80 hours. He would get \$26 if he belonged to the union."

"Everyone should stop working for employers who underpay. All workers should organize into unions and government should back them up . . ." (A 24-year-old married Negro boy who receives \$9 a week as a rag factory laborer.)

"Workers are underpaid. What we need is strikes!"

A few responses of the 10 per cent who believed that greater "individual effort" was the best way out:

"Work hard, be willing to take orders, and not give any sass back; and when you've worked three or four months, ask the boss for a raise."

"Do your work better and make a good impression on the boss."

"Go to school and get better education, and better jobs will come." (A 23-year-old graduate of a business training school who is employed as a bookkeeper at \$31.38 a week.)

"Just work like hell and pray."

FUNCTIONS OF GOVERNMENT

In order to acquire a more solid basis for conclusions as to the opinions young people have concerning the functions of government, we invited each subject to indulge in an expression of whatever ideas he might have on a number of current governmental problems.

SHOULD GOVERNMENT REGULATE WAGES AND HOURS?

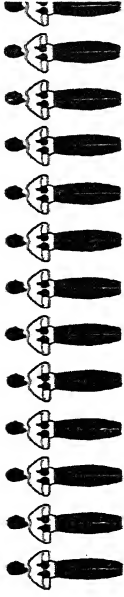
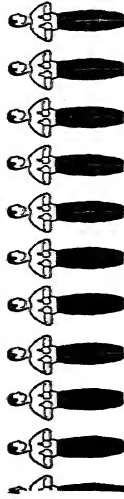
Each youth was asked what he had to say about the matter of governmental regulation of minimum wages and maximum hours. In fact, he was not only asked whether

SHOULD GOVERNMENT REGULATE WAGES AND HOURS ?

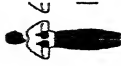
WHITE

NEGRO

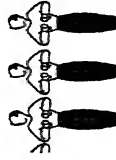
YES, IN ALL
BUSINESS AND
INDUSTRY



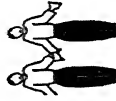
YES, IN SOME
BUSINESS AND
INDUSTRIES



NO REGULATION
AT ALL



NO OPINION



EACH FIGURE REPRESENTS THE OPINIONS OF 5% OF EACH RACE GROUP

or not he favored such regulation, but, if he did, the amount of industrial territory this regulation should cover.

It will be remembered that 40 per cent of the youth who believed wages were too low, and who offered suggestions for raising them, regarded some kind of governmental control as the *best* way out. In that question, it was not a matter of government control or no government control, but rather a choice among an unlimited number of possible means. In the present question, however, the issue is simply a matter of whether the government (meaning, of course, the federal government) should or should not regulate maximum hours and minimum wages.

For about three out of every four youth (73.6 per cent) who were interviewed, the answer was "yes." Only one youth in seven (14.2 per cent) considered the matter of hours and wages none of the government's business. The remaining 12 per cent had no opinion.

An analysis of the responses to this question reveals some interesting differences in the attitudes of the young people of various groups.

TABLE 88—EXTENT TO WHICH GOVERNMENT SHOULD REGULATE MINIMUM WAGES AND MAXIMUM HOURS IN INDUSTRY

Group	Percentage of youth preferring government regulation of minimum wages and maximum hours				Number of youth
	In some or all business or industry	In no business or industry	No opinion	Total	
All youth.....	73.6	14.2	12.2	100.0	13,528
City.....	80.7	14.5	4.8	100.0	5,943
Town.....	76.1	14.9	9.0	100.0	1,575
Village.....	72.5	14.2	13.3	100.0	3,024
Farm.....	62.5	14.3	23.2	100.0	2,811
Unemployed.....	76.5	11.6	11.9	100.0	2,629
Employed.....	73.7	14.7	11.6	100.0	6,272
Students.....	76.0	15.9	8.1	100.0	2,620
Homemakers.....	66.2	13.6	20.2	100.0	1,746
Voluntarily idle.....	65.5	19.9	14.6	100.0	246
Male: white.....	76.4	17.6	6.0	100.0	5,765
Negro.....	70.3	6.6	23.1	100.0	1,058
Female: white.....	74.4	14.3	11.3	100.0	5,546
Negro.....	67.5	5.5	27.0	100.0	1,001
16-year-olds.....	74.4	14.6	11.0	100.0	1,500
18-year-olds.....	76.7	14.9	8.4	100.0	1,473
20-year-olds.....	75.1	14.0	10.9	100.0	1,630
22-year-olds.....	75.8	14.0	10.2	100.0	1,376
24-year-olds.....	74.4	13.2	12.4	100.0	1,519

The differences that show up in the responses recorded in Table 88 are, to a certain extent, due to the varying degrees of ability of the youth in the various groups

to express an opinion. For example, only 63 per cent of the youth living on farms "voted" for government regulation, while 81 per cent of the urban youth so expressed themselves. The explanation for this disparity is to be found in the fact that five times as many farm youth as city youth were recorded as having "no opinion." This seems to be additional evidence that what is often referred to as the "conservative" attitude of persons living on farms and in rural areas may more directly be the result of the relative absence of the forces that mold opinion than anything peculiar to those areas or the people who live in them.

It will be observed that age seems to have no influence in determining the youths' attitude toward governmental regulation of wages and hours. Fifteen hundred 16-year-olds and 1,519 24-year-olds were asked this question. Exactly 74.4 per cent of each of these age groups considered it desirable. It should, perhaps, be further observed that the Negroes as a group were the least inclined to regard the matter of wages and hours as a nongovernmental affair. Only 6 per cent of them, in fact, considered it none of the government's business.

How Far Should Governmental Regulation Go?

Even more emphatic, perhaps, are the opinions of young people as to how far this regulation should go. Of the 9,954 youth who favored it, almost three out of every four (72.8 per cent) believed that not only the minimum wages paid and maximum hours worked in "big business," but in *all* business, should be brought within the scope of governmental regulation.

To us, the implications of these reactions of young people to the matter of wage and hour regulation are not unlike those that have been recorded elsewhere in this report. Young people, especially those who are more generally exposed to the forces that mold public opinion, are increasingly impelled to look to their central government for the solution of their problems.

Here again, we turn the discussion over to youth and let them speak for themselves. Three out of every four, it will be remembered, wanted governmental regulation of hours and wages, and three-fourths of these would include *all* business and industry.

"They [the employers] should have certain hours instead of making people work day and night, and the government is the only one can make them do it."

"They certainly need regulation at a place like ———, where you work 13 hours a day and get \$12 a week."

"He'd [the President] be a dictator, but it would be worth it."

"I'm against the *laissez faire* system."

"During the NRA, I made 75 cents a dozen [coats], and my coats were always ready for me to work on. Now I make 45 cents a dozen for doing the same thing and

we have to fight over the coats, often have to wait an hour in between, and then have to work overtime to make even \$10 a week. Naturally, we want the NRA back. They made us sign a petition at the factory to say that we didn't want the NRA. When they first passed the petition around, only two girls on a floor of eighty girls signed it. Then the boss came up and asked us who in the hell was influencing us not to sign. We said nobody was. So he closed the factory and told us we wouldn't have any more work until we did sign. Well, we have to eat—so naturally, we signed. All these small sewing factories around here and in Pennsylvania are really owned by one man, and we wouldn't be able to get a job in any other factory if we didn't do what the boss said." (A 24-year-old single girl, employed as a machine operator at an average of \$10 for a 40-hour week.)

"It [the government] should also regulate rents, food, clothing, and other things."

"I'd be working if they regulated it now." (This 21-year-old boy left school at grade 10, age 16, and has never had a job.)

"The government is the only thing we've had that's kept the country rolling."

"Now [since NRA] they work you as long and as hard as they wish." (A 20-year-old single girl, high school graduate, employed in a shirt factory at an average weekly wage of \$7.80 for a 41-hour week.)

"They [the government] should take care of everything."

"Government should control the whole country. It's the best thing."

"The government knows best how to run business."

"As long as it isn't pure socialism."

"It's terrible the way these stenographers have to know so much and get paid only \$13 a week."

The following are a few of the comments made by the almost negligible minority who believed that wages and hours were not concerns of government.

"I don't think the government should monkey with people's business."

"The guy that made NRA should have his head examined."

"This is a matter for the employers to decide. Most of them are fair if let alone. They know their business better than the government does."

"Heck, no!"

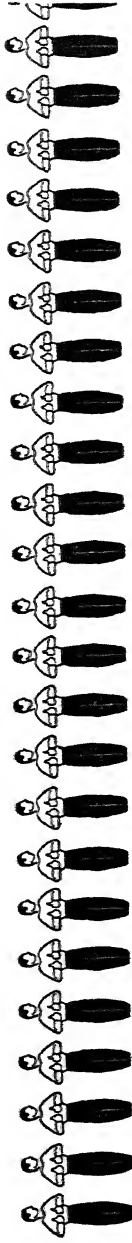
IS RELIEF A RESPONSIBILITY OF GOVERNMENT?

Here, again, the answer is an emphatic "yes." From whatever point of view the responses to this question are analyzed, the answer is essentially the same. Nine out of every ten youth were clearly of the opinion that unemployment relief is too large and too difficult a problem for individuals, private agencies, or local communities to meet.

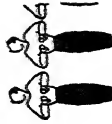
About the only difference in the responses of the various groups considered in Table 89 is between the white and Negro youth. However, even here the difference is negligible. The Negro youth are almost unanimously (94 per cent) in favor of government participation in meeting the general relief problem, while 89 per cent of the white youth are of the same opinion.

IS RELIEF A PROBLEM OF GOVERNMENT ?

YES



NO



**NO
OPINION**



EACH FIGURE REPRESENTS 500 YOUTH

It is also of some significance that almost none of the youth were found to be without a fairly definite opinion about this matter of relief. While a fourth of the Negroes (25 per cent), for example, had no opinion on the subject of whether the government should regulate hours and wages, less than 4 per cent (3.5) had any doubt as to the role that government should play in meeting the relief problem.

TABLE 89—EXTENT TO WHICH RELIEF OF THE NEEDY UNEMPLOYED IS REGARDED AS A VALID RESPONSIBILITY OF GOVERNMENT

Group	Percentage of youth			Number of youth
	Yes	No	No opinion	
All youth.....	89.5	8.0	2.5	13,528
Unemployed.....	92.4	5.5	2.1	2,629
Employed.....	88.9	8.5	2.6	6,272
Farm.....	89.9	6.9	3.2	2,552
Village.....	91.5	6.7	1.8	2,791
Town.....	89.0	8.4	2.6	1,407
City.....	89.2	9.0	1.8	5,346
White.....	89.1	9.0	1.9	10,149
Negro.....	94.2	2.3	3.5	1,960

How Much Relief Should Be Given?

Along with this question as to whether or not the government should participate in meeting the relief problem, each youth was also asked what he thought about the *amount* of relief that should be provided the needy unemployed. In other words, he was asked if he thought the relief provided should be on what is generally known as a "health and decency" level, or whether it should include only the necessities of "bare subsistence."

The brief table on page 223 indicates an overwhelming majority in favor of providing the needy unemployed with the higher, or "health and decency," level of relief.

Practically the same proportion (nine out of ten) favor this higher relief level as favor governmental participation in the problem. Only one in ten "voted" for "bare subsistence." The youth from relief families were only slightly more friendly toward a "health and decency" level than the youth from nonrelief families. Moreover, the Negroes of both relief and nonrelief families were more generally in favor of providing the higher relief level than white youth. About 8 per cent of the

youth from white relief families, and slightly more than 5 per cent from Negro relief families, expressed the opinion that relief grants should be limited to the necessities of bare subsistence.

TABLE 90—LEVEL OF RELIEF FAVORED BY YOUTH WHO CONSIDERED IT A VALID RESPONSIBILITY OF GOVERNMENT

Classification of youth	Level of relief			Number of youth
	Health and decency	Bare subsistence	Other	
All youth.....	88.0	10.4	1.6	12,106
White relief.....	90.8	7.7	1.5	1,077
White nonrelief.....	86.6	11.9	1.5	9,033
Negro relief.....	93.2	5.2	1.6	477
Negro nonrelief.....	93.6	5.4	1.0	1,449

Work Relief or Direct Relief?

On the subject of the *kind* of relief to be provided the needy unemployed, there was found to be almost no division of opinion. More than 95 per cent (95.1) considered it desirable to provide work, rather than direct, relief.

About the only differences that appear in the responses of the youth of different groups are to be found in the reactions of youth from white and Negro relief families. More than twice as large a proportion of the *Negro* youth from relief families favored direct relief than the *white* youth of relief families (7.3 per cent as against 2.8 per cent).

TABLE 91—TYPE OF RELIEF FAVORED BY YOUTH WHO CONSIDERED IT A VALID RESPONSIBILITY OF GOVERNMENT

Classification of youth	Type of relief			Number of youth
	Work relief	Direct relief	Other types	
All youth.....	95.1	3.3	1.6	12,106
White relief.....	95.7	2.8	1.5	1,077
White nonrelief.....	95.4	3.0	1.6	9,033
Negro relief.....	91.2	7.3	1.5	477
Negro nonrelief.....	94.8	4.2	1.0	1,449

The attitude of young people toward governmental participation in the general problem of unemployment relief may be further clarified by listening to what a few of them have to say.

"Give them more than just to squeeze along and keep from starving."

"They can't live on what they pay now. Some men working on a project now don't get as much as those who get a check." (direct relief)

"Somebody has got to take care of the down-and-outers."

"Should be given work so he wouldn't gradually become a bum."

"Lots of people on relief are just bums."

"If they stopped relief now, we'd probably have a revolution."

"By all means make them work, even if it is only moving stones from one pile to another and back again."

"If the government can't do anything to help people, I don't see how anybody else can."

"There should be a chance for advancement on these government jobs."

"The WPA is the best thing that ever happened."

"Work relief is a good idea, but it never works."

"Give 'em a decent job and a decent salary. You can't do nothin' on them WPA jobs . . . no chance for advancement."

"If you just give them a place to sleep and something to eat, they'd probably turn Communist."

"Relief people should be given what they are used to. You can't eat the Constitution."

"The government has plenty of money, let them give it out."

"It's up to the government."

"The government has spent so much money on older people, it would be a good idea if it helped the young people a bit."

SHOULD GOVERNMENT PERMIT CHILD LABOR?

The term "child labor," as used by the interviewers, involved only the gainful employment of children 14 and 15 years of age. After-school employment in non-hazardous occupations was not regarded as child labor.

An analysis of the responses of young people to this question reveals that, while only a negligible proportion (3.5 per cent) regarded the matter of child labor as no concern of government, the remaining majority were almost equally divided as to how far governmental regulation should go. In terms of round percentages, 47 per cent believed that child labor should be permitted under no circumstances whatever, and exactly the same proportion had the feeling that children under 16 should, under certain circumstances, be permitted to accept gainful employment.

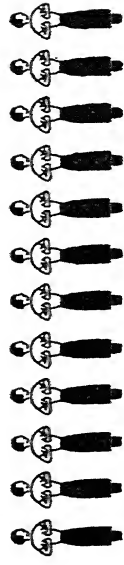
The responses of the various groups considered in Table 92 present some interesting differences. The proportion of youth who consider child labor as none of the government's business is largest among those who live on farms, and smallest among those who live in cities. This feeling, incidentally, is more general among Negro than white youth. Also significant is the fact that, as the occupation of the youth's father

SHOULD GOVERNMENT PROHIBIT THE GAINFUL LABOR OF CHILDREN UNDER 16 YEARS OF AGE ?

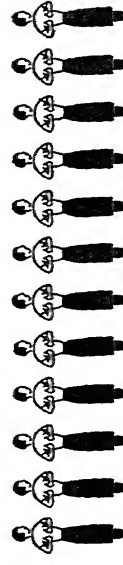
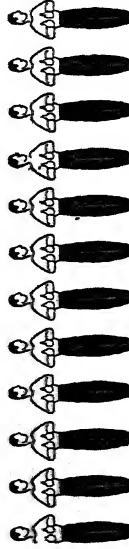
MALES

FEMALES

EXCEPT UNDER
CERTAIN
CIRCUMSTANCES



ALWAYS



NEVER



EACH FIGURE REPRESENTS THE RESPONSES OF 4% OF EACH SEX GROUP

descends from the upper to the lower levels, there is a progressive increase in the proportion of youth who believe that child labor is purely an individual or family concern.

TABLE 92—EXTENT TO WHICH GOVERNMENT SHOULD PERMIT GAINFUL LABOR OF CHILDREN 14 AND 15 YEARS OLD

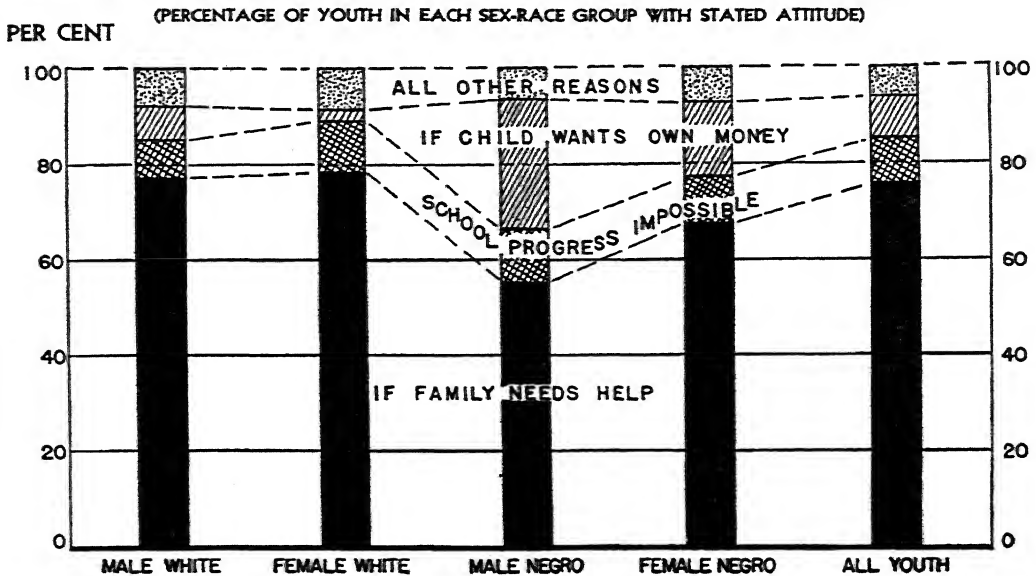
Classification of youth	Percentage of each youth group			
	Under no circumstances	Under certain circumstances	No concern of government	No opinion
All youth.....	46.9	47.3	3.5	2.3
Male: white.....	46.7	49.0	3.5	0.8
Negro.....	54.0	31.5	8.0	6.5
Female: white.....	46.1	50.1	2.4	1.4
Negro.....	51.6	36.1	5.6	6.7
Farm.....	36.2	52.5	7.0	4.3
Village.....	51.5	42.7	3.1	2.7
Town.....	57.0	39.4	2.8	0.8
City.....	47.4	49.6	2.3	0.7
Parents' religion:				
Protestant.....	47.5	46.9	3.5	2.1
Catholic.....	46.0	49.5	3.4	1.1
Mixed affiliations.....	45.2	49.0	3.7	2.1
Jewish.....	52.1	45.5	1.6	0.8
No affiliation.....	45.6	45.1	6.9	2.4
Father's occupation:				
Professional-technical.....	53.4	44.7	1.2	0.7
Managerial.....	52.5	44.4	2.6	0.5
Office-sales.....	52.0	46.0	1.2	0.8
Skilled.....	49.4	47.6	2.3	0.7
Semi-skilled.....	56.4	39.5	3.0	1.1
Unskilled.....	43.3	48.1	3.9	4.7
Domestic-personal.....	42.8	50.4	3.9	2.9
Farm owner-tenant.....	37.3	53.8	5.8	3.1
Farm laborer.....	22.1	54.6	12.3	11.0

These data further disclose the fact that there is almost no variation in the responses of the youth of the various religious groups. The similarity in the attitudes of youth from Protestant and Catholic homes is indicated by the 3.5 per cent of the Protestant, and 3.4 per cent of the Catholic youth, who believed that government should leave child labor alone.

The "circumstances" under which the 47 per cent of the youth interviewed believed that child labor was permissible were largely economic in character. As revealed in Figure 21, three-fourths of this number believed that children under 16 should be permitted to accept gainful employment only when their parents needed the income their employment would bring.

A philosopher, we believe it was Schopenhauer, has made the observation somewhere that a person's interests and desires eventually become the axioms of his philosophy. This is possibly one way of intimating that attitudes are usually conditioned by self-interest. Our opinions, like our behavior, usually reflect what we fundamentally desire.

FIGURE 21
WHEN SHOULD THE GOVERNMENT PERMIT CHILD LABOR?



At least in this respect the attitudes of young people are probably not essentially different from the attitudes of adults. For example, 50 per cent of the youth interviewed believed that government should, under some circumstances, *permit* child labor. On the other hand, more than 70 per cent believed that the matter of minimum wages and maximum hours is a legitimate concern of government.

It is highly improbable that the substantial difference in the responses to these questions is purely accidental. A plausible explanation may be found in the belief of many young people that the interests of themselves and their families are less likely to be generally served through child labor legislation than through legislation affecting wages and hours. At any rate, exactly 900 more youth were found who favored the regulation of wages and hours in *all* business and industry than were found to favor a blanket prohibition of the gainful employment of all children under 16 years of age.

What this probably means is that young people are far more interested in bread and butter than in any finespun social philosophy. It may be bread and butter for themselves or their families, or it may be for their friends and neighbors, but it is

still bread and butter. As indicated in Figure 21, the outstanding reason given as a justification of child labor is the economic need of the family. If these youth had not been conscious of this need, hardly an eighth of them would have been in favor of permitting the gainful employment of children under 16 years of age.

Conspicuously absent in the thinking of young people on this subject are the arguments in which certain adults so frequently and so passionately indulge. Nowhere was there found a suggestion that the prohibition of child labor would immediately result in a dissolution of family ties, the regimentation of their generation, the destruction of individual freedom, or an eventual political marriage with the bogies of Leningrad.

The responses that youth made to this question were both interesting and varied. A few from the 47 per cent who favored a general prohibition of child labor:

"I learnt that lesson, and a person that went through it should know." (A young man, 22 years old and unemployed, who received his first full-time job at the age of 13.)

"If a family is dependent upon a child of 16, it is the government's responsibility and not the child's."

"A youth belongs in school. The government should help the family."

"It [child labor] takes away from somebody else. Young boys can be hired too cheap."

"A lot of men are out of work. Why should young people get out of school and take jobs from older men?"

"Let the government help support the family so child can go to school."

"All children should finish high school."

"I think a child should be made to stay in school even if it's necessary for the government to keep it there. I'd be better off if I had stayed in school." (A 19-year-old married girl who secured her first job at the age of 15.)

"Children [child laborers] get old too quick and don't get the right things out of life."

"They have to work enough when they get older."

"Mine are going to school and graduate if it kills me." (Comment from a 24-year-old married woman with three children.)

"My mother was sick and I missed a lot of school, so I failed two subjects and they made me leave. I'd have liked to stay."

"Keep them in school until they are ready for a decent job so that they can help their family twice as much."

"A family ought not to raise a big gang if they haven't enough to keep them."

"The little bit of work they do don't do anybody any good."

"I think anybody who quits school before 18 is crazy. There ought to be a law."

A few comments from the negligible 4 per cent who believed that the gainful labor of children was none of the government's business:

"Depends on boy. If he wants it, let him go ahead."

"Young people are more advanced today, and should do as they please."

"Fourteen is old enough to work. My God, a girl is old enough to get married at sixteen."

THE SUFFRAGE

Throughout this discussion of attitudes, we have called attention to what appears to be a more or less general desire on the part of young people to extend the province of government. On a few occasions, we have also hinted at the fact that this enthusiasm for the extension of the sphere of government has been accompanied by a somewhat lukewarm faith in some of the basic methods and procedures of democracy.

In these intimations, we have been thinking particularly of two things—the attitude of youth of voting age toward the privilege of voting, and their attitude toward the suffrage as a means of placing capable men in public office.

DO YOUTH VOTE?

In our effort to determine the extent to which young people were taking advantage of their right to vote, we limited ourselves to the 4,184 youth who were 22, 23, and 24 years old. By excluding the 21-year-old youth, we avoided the danger of considering young people as nonvoters who, in fact, had never had an opportunity to exercise their franchise. It can be assumed therefore that all the youth considered had had an opportunity to vote. Of this number only 2,291, or 55 per cent, were found to have voted when the last opportunity presented itself.

TABLE 93—EXTENT TO WHICH YOUTH 22 TO 24 YEARS OF AGE VOTED AT THEIR LAST OPPORTUNITY*

Age group	Percentage of each age group			Number of youth
	Voted	Did not vote	Total	
22.....	36.7	63.3	100.0	1,400
23.....	60.0	40.0	100.0	1,240
24.....	66.9	33.1	100.0	1,544
Total.....	54.8	45.2	100.0	4,184

* Last opportunity usually meant one prior to the presidential election of November 1936.

It is both interesting and encouraging to note that the proportion of youth who voted increased with age. While slightly more than a third (36.7 per cent) of the 22-year-old youth were found to have voted during the preceding election, slightly more than two-thirds (66.9 per cent) of the 24-year-olds had taken advantage of this opportunity.

Why Youth Fail to Vote

Along with this measure of the extent to which young people vote, an effort was made to discover the reasons or motives for voting or not voting. Such a wide variety of reasons was given that it is difficult to come to any very definite conclusions regarding them. Nearly half of those who did *not* vote (44 per cent) admitted that they were not interested. More than a fourth (26 per cent) gave a variety of "other reasons," prominent among which was the failure to register, which, of course, reflects a lack of interest. The great majority of the remaining 30 per cent failed to give any reason for their failure to vote. The only thing therefore about which one can be certain is that, among the known reasons, indifference is clearly the most prominent.

Why Youth Vote

The reasons given by the 55 per cent of the youth who *voted* are a good deal more specific. Seventy-two per cent stated that they had voted primarily because they considered it their duty or privilege as a citizen. A third of the remaining 28 per cent admitted that their voting was motivated by a feeling of party allegiance.

When all the youth of voting age are considered together, the facts indicate that slightly more than 60 per cent either failed to vote at their last opportunity or, in voting, were primarily impelled by some motive other than a consciousness of their duty as citizens. Thus we have, on one side, a desire for change or expansion in government activities, and, on the other, a definitely limited eagerness to participate in this change.

Here are a few comments which suggest the variety of motives that prompted the voters to go to the polls.

"Because I thought I might exert my one-fifty-millionth of a voice in the government which I have."

"I read a little. It's so hard to tell who is the best man. I have no way of knowing. No one really knows who is the best man."

"I heard that if you voted, it made it easier to get a job."

"I was dragged up there by my family."

"Just the thrill of it. To know that I was 21 and could vote."

"I think it might help me in some way."

"Because I got five bucks."

"To kill time . . . doesn't mean anything."

"For my daddy's sake."

"He was a good man for the job . . . maybe he'd do me a favor."

"I don't like indifference. If everybody were indifferent about voting, anything might happen."

"I think that everyone of voting age should take part in the government. A lot of people talk about it and don't do anything about it."

"They said I was old enough . . . that's the onliest reason."

"Just went with the rest of the boys."

"But I don't know yet what the difference is—like between Republicans and Democrats."

"To get our President back in. Thought wages and times would be better."

"Voted for the side I was raised on."

"To help our country and make things as good as we can."

"I string along with the old man."

"Because my vote is more important than the vote of the ignorant classes."

"Because he [President Roosevelt] kept me off the street for two years." (A CCC enrollee.)

"It's the only real privilege we have."

"I vote for my rights. I never get 'em, but I vote for 'em."

The following are a few comments from the 45 per cent of the youth who did *not* vote.

"I don't think it's a woman's place to vote."

"I'm going to vote next time, though. This President is all for the rich people."

"I never knew how or what to do."

"My man did not get nominated."

"Did not know much about politics. That's one thing schools don't teach—politics."

"It doesn't make much difference to us factory girls who gets in."

"I was too busy."

"My vote might put the wrong man in."

"It was too crowded where I went to register."

"No use to vote. The big political bosses elect who they want."

ARE CANDIDATES ELECTED BECAUSE OF MERIT?

At various times in the analysis and interpretation of our findings, we have called attention to the fact that, while young people appear very definitely to favor an expansion of governmental activities, they seem to be dangerously unaware of the part which, in a democracy, the individual must play. We have previously made the observation that, along with this desire of young people for increased governmental activity, they seemed to have but little faith in the ability of democratic institutions to achieve the ends they desire.

What we had in mind was the attitude of young people toward what is unquestionably our basic democratic institution—the suffrage. We have already disclosed the extent to which youth of voting age availed themselves of this privilege. Our present task is briefly to suggest what they think about its effectiveness as a means of placing capable men in public office.

Thirteen and a half thousand young people were asked this question: How frequently are public officials elected to office because they are capable? If the youth believed that candidates were elected because of merit more often than for other

reasons, his response was recorded as "frequently." If he believed that, in the majority of cases, candidates were elected for some reason *other* than merit, his response was recorded as "infrequently."

Of every hundred youth, six regarded the suffrage as a perfectly efficient institution, fifty believed that it often does what it is intended to do, thirty-one were convinced that it seldom or never works, while thirteen, for one reason or another, had nothing to say.

Four thousand and two hundred youth expressed the opinion that candidates are seldom, if ever, elected primarily because of their fitness for the office they wish to fill. The youth so expressing themselves were asked to specify what they believed to be the forces behind the political success of these candidates. The following table tells the dismal story.

TABLE 94—METHODS BY WHICH CANDIDATES ARE ELECTED TO PUBLIC OFFICE*

Method	Percentage of youth
Political pull.....	28.7
Money, graft, bribery.....	26.1
Political machine.....	17.1
Propaganda, false promises.....	8.1
Personality.....	4.9
Ignorant or indifferent voters.....	3.8
Other reasons.....	11.3
Total.....	100.0

* Based upon the 4,222 youth who believed that candidates are seldom or never elected because of merit.

This somewhat disturbing dearth of enthusiasm about the efficiency of the basic institution of democracy is betrayed in some of the following comments.

"If they're not crooked when they go in, they're crooked when they come out."

"Money talks."

"All politicians are crooked, or they wouldn't be politicians. I don't know of any better system than ours, though."

"Flowery speeches."

"Rackets."

"They give you a cigar and a glass of whiskey and you vote the way they want."

"Politicians are to me a band of cheap shysters."

"The man who has the most money to spend for campaigns wins."

"The best showman wins."

"Crookedness. This question is like asking if anyone ever heard of an honest politician."

"The best liar wins."

The 50 per cent who believed that candidates are frequently elected to public office because of merit, while more generous, are still somewhat guarded in their judgment.

"If they wasn't best, they wouldn't be elected."

"I guess he'd have to be the best man or he wouldn't get in."

"About two times out of three."

"About half and half."

"Politicians are more sinned against than sinning."

"The unfortunate part is that good men don't stay in office very long."

"They're capable because they are all college graduates."

"The majority of politicians are the highest type of men."

"I guess they are capable, but politicians have a bad name . . . I don't know why."

"I imagine that God sees that the best man wins."

EMPLOYMENT OF MARRIED WOMEN

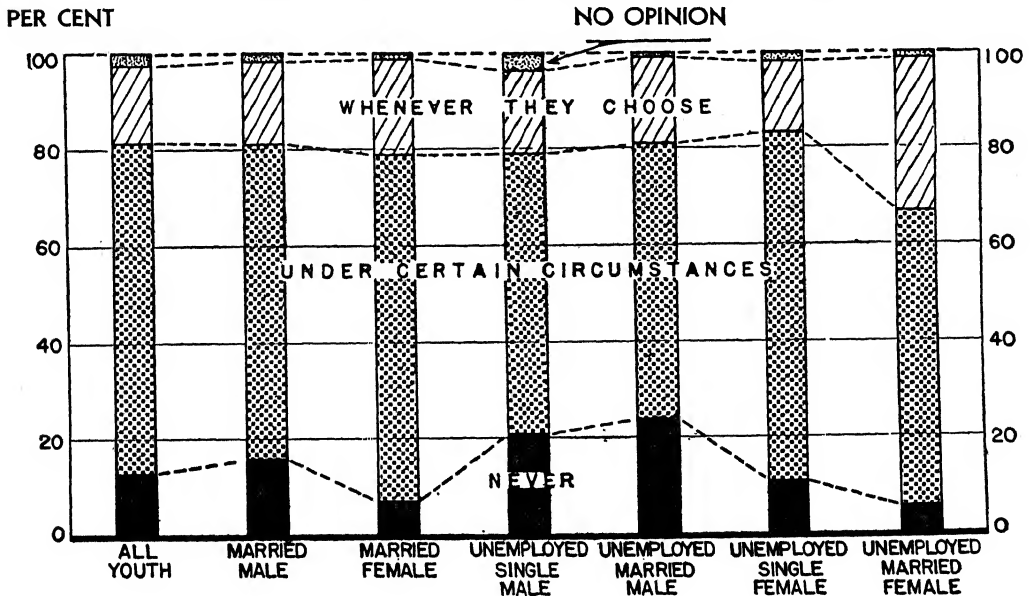
In view of the increasingly severe competition between men and women workers for certain types of jobs, it is interesting to know how young people feel about the employment of married women who want to work. A surprisingly small proportion—only 12.8 per cent—would exclude them from the labor market.

As with other questions previously discussed, it is clear that a natural self-interest colors the thinking of various groups of youth. For example, the group that

FIGURE 22

SHOULD MARRIED WOMEN ACCEPT GAINFUL EMPLOYMENT?

(PERCENTAGE OF YOUTH IN EACH GROUP WITH STATED ATTITUDE)



was most inclined to believe that married women should accept work, were the married women themselves. Only 6.5 per cent of this group would deprive them of the right to accept available jobs. On the other hand, the group that was most generally in favor of prohibiting the employment of married women were the married men. Figure 22 reflects the responses which the youth of a few of the groups made to this question.

In our discussion of the attitude of young people toward the gainful employment of children, we made the observation that they appeared to be a good deal more interested in bread and butter than in any social philosophy. The same way of looking at things is reflected by the fact that the great majority of youth would permit the gainful employment of married women only if their income was needed to supplement the earnings of the husband. Only about a sixth (16.8 per cent) believed that married women should accept gainful employment whenever they choose, while almost three-fifths (57.9 per cent) believed that economic need was the only legitimate justification.

When one digs beneath the surface and uncovers the conditions under which large numbers of youth are living, this point of view is quite understandable. It will be remembered that the "average family" of the married group consisted of a husband, a wife, and one child. The median weekly wage of the married males was found to be \$17.06. It is hardly surprising therefore that so large a proportion of young people consider the needs of a family as ample justification for the gainful employment of either children or married women.

A clearer idea about how youth react to the employment of married women may come from a glance at a few of the following comments.

"Only when it's work or starve."

"Most married women are working now because they 'have to.'"

"I went to work because we couldn't get along on what my husband earns."

"If she doesn't have to work, she should give others a chance."

"Rather have a married woman work than have a family on relief."

"Let them stay home, that's where they belong."

"She shouldn't work just because she wants to. There's a man in our office who makes over \$200 a month, and his wife draws down another couple hundred that somebody else could use."

"If you want nice things and everything electric, then it's up to a woman to work."

"She should be able to work if she feels it will make her life fuller. She has as much right to work as a married man."

"All women should work in order to be independent."

"The men don't make enough for us."

"Every girl should work before she is married, so she will know how a man feels when he comes home at night."

"They ain't got no business working. That's what they got married for."

SHOULD MARRIED WOMEN WORK ?

RESPONSES OF MALES

RESPONSES OF FEMALES

YES, IF INCOME
IS NEEDED



YES, IF THEY
PLEASE



NO



NO OPINION



EACH FIGURE REPRESENTS THE OPINIONS OF 400 YOUTH

"If we had the proper kind of government, women would not have to work."

"There'd be a lot of people go hungry in this town if they didn't."

"If my husband were really looking for work and couldn't find it, I'd go to work. But if I felt he were loafing, we'd both starve together, because I'd never work to support a lazy man."

"Most factories like married women; they stick better."

"There should be a definite standard set by the government as to what is a decent wage, and if husband makes this or over, the wife should not be allowed to work. Eighteen hundred dollars a year would be a fair standard." (The estimated yearly income of the married male youth was found to be \$887.)

"If she's the Clinging Vine, stay home; if not, go out and get some place."

WHAT ABOUT DRINKING?

As used by the interviewers, "drinking" meant the indulgence in any kind of alcoholic beverage. It does *not* reflect the *degree* of indulgence. As a matter of record, the term "drinking" covered all the territory between sipping a cocktail at a wedding party and habitual indulgence. The purpose of the question was not alone to discover the extent of such indulgence, but also to find out the attitude of youth toward drinking generally.

The matter of drinking, though still a subject of considerable concern among large numbers of our adult population, is probably not as "timely" a question as it was four or five years ago when the Eighteenth Amendment was a part of the law of the land. Even so, there is still enough interest in this subject to justify its consideration here.

In considering the responses to this question, it should be borne in mind that the state which served us as a laboratory has for years been comparatively liberal in its reaction to the matter of drinking. Moreover, when interviews were taken, alcoholic beverages of all kinds were available to persons over 21 years of age. For these reasons, it is possible that the attitudes reflected by our findings may be colored, to a limited extent, by conditions that are local in character.

DO YOUTH DRINK?

When the responses of all the youth are considered together, one finds that more than half (52.9 per cent) reported that they drank, while less than a fifth (19.3 per cent) reported that they were generally opposed. The remaining 27.8 per cent stated that, while they did not personally indulge in alcoholic beverages, they had no objection to others doing so.

A consideration of these responses from the standpoint of certain groups reveals some interesting differences. For example (Table 95), it appears that boys are more

WHAT ABOUT DRINKING ?

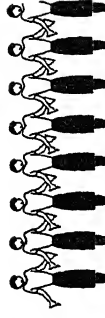
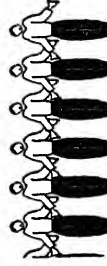
MALES

FEMALES

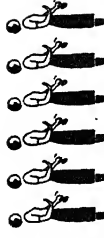
YOUTH WHO DRINK



DO NOT DRINK
BUT NOT OPPOSED



OPPOSED TO
DRINKING GENERALLY



EACH COMPLETE FIGURE REPRESENTS THE ASSERTIONS OF 4% OF EACH SEX GROUP

likely to drink than girls, although almost half (44.7 per cent) of the girls reported that they drank. This sex difference was found to be particularly marked among the boys and girls living on farms, where almost twice as large a proportion of boys stated that they indulged in some kind of intoxicating beverage. A smaller proportion of Negroes than white youth reported that they drank, and among the religious groups drinking appears to be most general among the Catholics and least general among the Protestants.

TABLE 95—ATTITUDE OF YOUTH TOWARD THE DRINKING OF
INTOXICATING BEVERAGES

Classification of youth	Percentage in each youth group			Number of youth
	Drinks	Does not drink		
		Not opposed	Opposed	
All youth.....	52.9	27.8	19.3	13,368
Male.....	60.7	24.9	14.4	6,821
Female.....	44.7	30.8	24.5	6,547
White.....	54.9	25.5	19.6	11,301
Negro.....	41.5	40.5	18.0	2,065
Farm male.....	60.4	23.7	15.9	1,583
Farm female.....	33.3	34.7	32.0	1,202
City male.....	63.2	26.6	10.2	3,065
City female.....	53.3	31.2	15.5	2,921
Catholic.....	63.2	28.0	8.8	2,493
Jewish.....	61.1	32.5	6.4	486
None.....	55.1	22.6	22.3	323
Mixed.....	53.8	29.7	16.5	1,129
Protestant.....	49.3	27.5	23.2	8,807

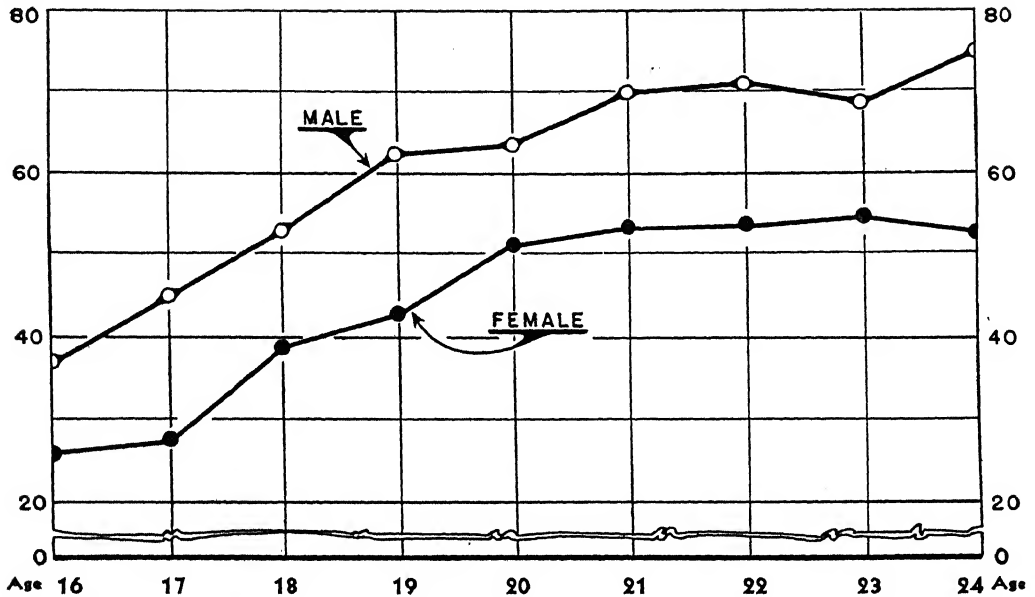
EXTENT OF DRINKING BY MINORS

Of special interest to the lawmakers who draw up laws designed to prevent drinking by minors is Figure 23, which reflects the extent of drinking among the youth of various ages between 16 and 24.

More than half the boys (52.5 per cent) and over a third of the girls (38 per cent) who were under 21 reported that they drank. We reiterate that these figures do not mean that such proportions of our youth are actual or potential alcoholic addicts. All they mean, in fact, is that, with varying frequency and degrees of moderation, large numbers of our young people under 21 years of age indulge in one or more kinds of alcoholic beverages.

FIGURE 23
DO YOUTH DRINK?

PER CENT



How young people feel about drinking may be further clarified by some of the following comments.

"I drink a glass of beer once in a while, but just to be sociable."

"Whiskey I hate, but I can drink a glass of beer any time."

"I think a man should get drunk once in a while. It gives you a different viewpoint. People are too restrained when they are sober."

"Drinking's a bad habit, but if you're at a party, you don't like to be backward."

"Older people should try to set a better example."

"If you go out at all with a crowd, you've got to."

"I drink, but I'm not a rummy."

"As far as hard liquor is concerned, I wouldn't even smell it."

"As much as I can hold."

"They call you a poor sport if you don't."

"It's all right if it makes you happy."

"A little wine at the Christmas holidays."

A little more than a fourth of the youth did not drink, but were not opposed to others drinking.

"It's all right if they don't get drunk."

"I don't see any sense in it."

"If they know how to handle it."

"If youth has character enough to know when to stop."

"If they don't make it a habit."

"I prefer ice cream."

About a fifth of the youth were opposed to drinking generally.

"I wouldn't touch it if it were given to me. I have seen what it has done to my father."

"It's about the worst curse there is. I have lived with it all my life."

"I despise drinks and drunks."

"Alcohol is the root of all problems."

"Drinking puts people on a level with bums."

"Drinking is the biggest problem today. There are too many places where young people can go and get all they want to drink."

"They ought to kill the man that invented whiskey."

WAR

At a time when clouds of war cast their dismal shadows over much of the world, the question of "what the United States would do" is very much in the minds of thoughtful people. And along with this question are still other ones. If war comes to America, how will this younger generation react to the sound of drums and marching feet? To what extent have the peace propaganda and the war-hating speeches of the past few years made a real impression on the minds of our youth?

It would, of course, require an actual war to produce an unchallengeable answer to these questions. The only light that we can throw upon what the answers would be is to indicate what youth *think* about war, and what they *say* they would do if war were declared.

WHAT YOUTH THINK ABOUT WAR

The great variety of ways in which young people react to the idea of war is suggested by Table 96.

Almost exactly six youth in every ten (60.7 per cent) regard war as a "needless and preventable occurrence." Slightly more than a fourth (26.9 per cent) consider it a necessary evil. About half of this latter group are convinced that, human nature being what it is, wars are inevitable. Three per cent consider war the inescapable consequence of commercial competition, while another 3 per cent believe that wars are not only inevitable but quite justifiable as a means of settling international disputes.

Girls are generally more inclined than boys to regard war as needless and preventable. Moreover, substantially smaller numbers of girls recognize any valid economic or political justification for war.

TABLE 96—ATTITUDE OF MALE AND FEMALE YOUTH TOWARD WAR

Responses	Percentage		
	Male	Female	Both sexes
Needless and preventable.....	54.7	66.9	60.7
Necessary evil.....	31.9	21.6	26.9
Because of human nature.....	15.6	10.5	13.1
Because of trade.....	4.2	1.9	3.1
Does not know; other reasons.....	12.1	9.2	10.7
War is justifiable.....	4.5	1.6	3.1
For expansion.....	1.3	0.4	0.9
For retaliation.....	3.2	1.2	2.2
War is a good thing.....	2.7	0.7	1.7
For economic prosperity.....	1.8	0.6	1.2
For personal adventure.....	0.9	0.1	0.5
Other opinions.....	1.3	1.8	1.5
No opinion.....	4.9	7.4	6.1
Total.....	100.0	100.0	100.0
Number of youth.....	6,852	6,616	13,468

In this question, particularly, the spontaneous comments that young people made are quite as instructive as any table could be. A table, by its nature, must confine itself to the general character of the responses. It is not intended to present the cause of a response, or to suggest what it is in the background of any individual youth which impels him to respond as he does.

One of our agents discovered, for example, that in a certain area the attitude that wars are not only justifiable, but quite desirable, was recurring with an almost monotonous frequency. This particular area was once a prosperous mining and industrial region. Wages were high and jobs were plentiful. Then came the loss of markets and the exodus of industries. High wages and ample employment have become memories—things that oldsters talk about. While youth listen to these glowing tales of a golden age, they look around them and wish for any kind of cataclysm that might make things better for themselves and their families. Among other things, they wish for war.

These youth are not bedeviled with any delusions of grandeur. They have heard somewhere that when wars come, employment increases and wages go up. To them, war, like laws and government and social philosophy, is primarily a matter of bread and butter.

"War keeps out the unemployed. It will either kill 'em or give 'em a job."

"We should have a war to get rid of a few excess people."

"Should have wars to kill off half the people so that the other half could get work."

"It would do the country some good . . . straighten things out, kill off people and make more jobs."

"Should have wars . . . needed now and then . . . too many people. People don't make enough; some starve. After wars, times get better."

The majority of youth (60 per cent) believe that wars are not only needless but preventable.

"Wars could be prevented if people would get together and talk things over."

"There's no need for war when wages are good, and they are better now."

"If we spent some of the money promoting peace that we spend on the army and navy, there never would be a war."

"War doesn't have to be . . . too many big shots who don't have to fight are sitting back planning it."

"War is needless, brutal, barbarous, uncivilized, and inexcusable. If we can't outlaw it for the world, we can at least outlaw it for this country."

"I think it's pretty terrible. There is a certain amount of glory in war, though."

"Just a lot of big shots get together and plan them. Youths could prevent them by refusing to go. If people could just have it so no bands would play or flags wave, then people would not be so anxious to enlist."

IF WAR WERE DECLARED

Probably no generation in the history of America has been so continuously and persistently bombarded with anti-war propaganda as the one we are studying. The speeches of politicians, the action of movies and plays, the radio programs of peace societies, and the restless pens of numberless novelists, essayists, and poets have been dedicated to the task of tearing away the cloak of glory from the brutal business of war.

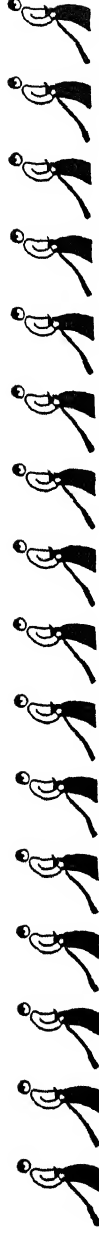
Only an actual war in which the United States is engaged could reveal the depth of the impression that this concentration of peace propaganda has made upon the minds of our youth. In the fortunate absence of such a war, the only means by which the depth of this impression can be measured is to ask young people for their honest opinions as to what they *think* they would do if war were declared.

Because war is more directly a man's affair, the young men were asked to state what they thought they would do. The young women, however, were asked what they thought they would advise their brothers, fathers, or sweethearts to do in such a crisis.

About fifteen youth out of every sixteen (93.8 per cent) were found to have a fairly definite idea as to the action they would take if war were declared. Table 97

WAR! WHAT YOUTH WOULD DO IF WAR WERE DECLARED

GO IF DRAFTED



VOLUNTEER
IMMEDIATELY



VOLUNTEER ONLY
IF INVASION
THREATENED



REFUSE TO GO



SEEK OFFICIAL
EXEMPTION



PERFORM ONLY
NON-COMBATIVE
SERVICE



THEY DON'T
KNOW



EACH FIGURE REPRESENTS 300 YOUTH

presents a rather complete picture of the responses to this question. It will be seen that they fall into six different classifications:

Youth who said they would volunteer immediately

Youth who said they would go only if drafted

Youth who said they would go if invasion threatened

Youth who said they would refuse to go

Youth who said they would "take other action," such as "seek official exemption" and do "noncombative service"

Youth who said they did not know what they would do

FACTORS APPEARING TO AFFECT THE ACTION YOUTH WOULD TAKE IN CASE OF WAR

Sex. As with so much of the data we have analyzed, the real meaning of these responses is uncovered only when they are considered from the point of view of specific groups. For example, it will be seen that, when *all* the youth are considered together, about one in every six (16.4 per cent) stated that he would refuse to go. A glance at the responses of the two sex groups brings out the fact that this large proportion is the result of the responses of the girls. The girls who stated that they would advise their brothers, husbands, or sweethearts to refuse to go outnumbered the boys who said they would refuse by almost two to one (21.1 per cent as against 11.9 per cent).

Although this group of potential "conscientious objectors" seems surprisingly large, the facts suggest that the great majority of male youth would, if called upon, go to war. Over 70 per cent (71.1) state that they would either volunteer immediately or go if drafted. Twelve per cent would go only if their country were threatened with invasion.

Age. Age seems to be an even stronger factor than sex in determining "war behavior." As youth get older, there is a progressive decline in the number who would immediately volunteer, and a progressive increase in the number who say they would refuse to go. This tendency is true of both sexes.

Area. The matter of population density also seems to exert an influence upon the action youth think they would take if war were declared. The largest proportion of "potential enlistments" was found among youth living in cities, and the smallest among those living on farms. On the other hand, only a fourth (25.4 per cent) of the city youth say they would wait for the draft, while slightly more than half the farm youth (51.1 per cent) report this as the action they would take.

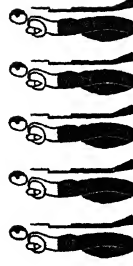
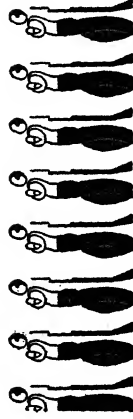
Religion. The youth's religious background also seems to exert an influence upon what he thinks he would do. The greatest differences show up between the responses of youth from Catholic and Jewish homes. The largest and the smallest pro-

WHO WOULD REFUSE TO GO TO WAR ?

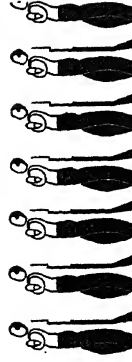
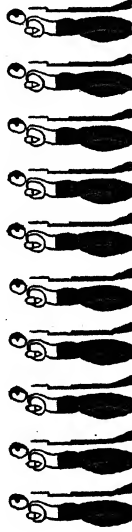
GIRLS WHO WOULD ADVISE THEIR
HUSBANDS OR BROTHERS TO REFUSE TO GO

BOYS WHO SAY THEY
WOULD REFUSE TO GO

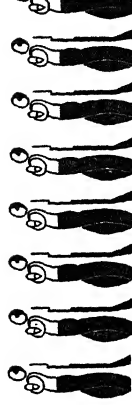
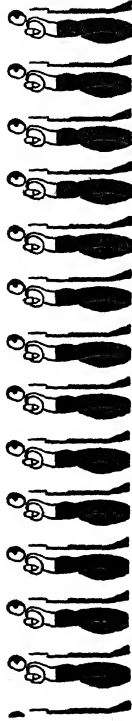
18 YEARS OLD



20 YEARS OLD



24 YEARS OLD



EACH FIGURE REPRESENTS THE RESPONSES OF 2% OF EACH AGE-SEX GROUP

portions of youth who stated they would immediately volunteer came, respectively, from Catholic and Jewish homes. Of even greater significance, perhaps, is the fact that more than twice as large a proportion of Jewish youth stated they would refuse

TABLE 97—ACTION YOUTH WOULD TAKE IN CASE OF WAR

Classification of youth	Percentage of each youth group					
	Volun- teer	Go if drafted	Go if invasion threat- ened	Refuse to go	Other action	Does not know
All youth.....	30.4	35.3	10.0	16.4	1.7	6.2
Male youth.....	35.5	35.6	12.2	11.9	0.8	4.0
Single.....	36.8	34.4	12.3	11.8	0.8	3.9
Married.....	27.0	43.9	11.9	12.0	0.7	4.5
Female youth.....	24.8	35.6	8.1	21.1	1.7	8.7
Single.....	28.9	33.4	8.9	18.6	1.5	8.7
Married.....	16.8	39.9	6.5	26.1	2.1	8.6
16-year-old males.....	46.5	27.2	11.1	10.3	1.2	3.7
16-year-old females.....	34.5	30.1	10.7	14.8	1.6	8.3
20-year-old males.....	33.0	30.2	17.7	13.4	1.9	3.8
20-year-old females.....	23.5	34.1	11.5	20.1	1.2	9.6
24-year-old males.....	28.4	33.4	18.2	15.1	1.5	3.4
24-year-old females.....	16.9	30.1	15.7	26.5	2.0	8.8
White.....	32.0	32.8	11.0	16.4	1.8	6.0
Negro.....	21.6	50.4	3.1	16.2	0.9	7.8
City.....	36.8	25.4	12.1	19.1	1.0	5.6
Village.....	29.4	40.5	11.2	12.3	1.3	5.3
Town.....	25.0	36.2	11.8	18.7	2.1	6.2
Farm.....	20.2	51.1	4.7	13.9	1.2	8.9
Parents' religion:						
Catholic.....	38.7	31.8	9.6	14.3	0.9	4.7
Mixed affiliations.....	35.7	27.0	11.4	18.8	0.8	6.3
Protestant.....	28.4	37.7	9.9	15.9	1.4	6.7
None.....	28.4	29.0	12.4	18.3	2.4	9.5
Jewish.....	26.9	25.8	12.7	28.9	0.4	5.3
Nonstudents by school grade com- pleted:						
Less than 6th grade.....	24.4	48.7	3.4	13.8	1.6	8.1
6th grade.....	25.2	48.9	2.8	15.9	1.7	5.5
7th grade.....	29.0	42.6	3.5	15.0	1.2	8.7
8th grade.....	36.3	33.6	6.1	16.2	1.3	6.5
9th grade.....	34.3	35.4	7.2	15.9	1.2	6.0
10th or 11th not graduate.....	36.9	32.0	10.8	14.1	0.9	5.3
11th or 12th graduate.....	26.8	35.6	13.9	15.2	1.8	6.7
1 year beyond high school.....	25.8	25.8	18.1	20.3	3.2	6.8
2 or 3 years beyond.....	19.2	27.1	17.3	26.6	4.3	5.5
4 or more years beyond.....	21.7	24.7	15.6	30.6	2.3	5.1

to go (28.9 per cent of the Jewish, as against 14.3 per cent of the Catholic youth). As previously indicated, this undoubtedly reflects, among other things, the higher educational attainment of the Jewish youth.

DOES EDUCATION AFFECT BEHAVIOR IN CASE OF WAR ?

RESPONSES OF YOUTH WHO HAD

LESS THAN SIXTH GRADE EDUCATION

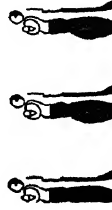
GO IF
DRAFTED



VOLUNTEER

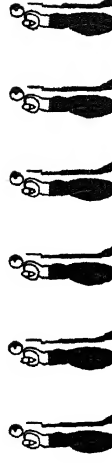


REFUSE TO GO



RESPONSES OF YOUTH WHO HAD

FOUR OR MORE YEARS IN COLLEGE



EACH FIGURE REPRESENTS THE STATEMENTS OF 5% OF EACH EDUCATIONAL GROUP

School grade completed. It will be remembered that, at the time when the interviews were taken, the median ages of the youth of all grade groups, with the exception of those in college, showed very little variation. Thus the differences in the responses of the youth in the various grade groups presented in Table 97 can properly be interpreted as indicating the effect that varying degrees of schooling have had upon the general attitude of youth toward war.

Perhaps the outstanding difference in the responses of the youth from the various educational levels is reflected in the varying extent to which the youth from above and below the college level stated they would refuse to go to war. Twice as large a proportion of college graduates stated they would refuse as the youth who had completed the eighth grade or less (30.6 per cent as against 15.2 per cent). Moreover, the proportion of youth who would seek official exemption or perform only noncombative service tends to increase with the amount of schooling youth received. Among the college graduates, there was a substantially larger proportion who asserted they would refuse to go than stated they would immediately volunteer.

Summary. Although it is difficult to measure with any degree of precision the relative potency of the various factors we have just considered, it would seem that age and the amount of schooling youth receive exert the strongest influence in determining the action youth think they would take in case of war. It seems quite clear that as youth become older they become definitely more inclined toward independence of action. And, as they receive more schooling, they tend to be considerably more discriminating in their ideas concerning the action they would take.

How many of these youth would change to other points of view if a war were actually declared, no one can say. About all our data tell us is that, after twenty years of high-powered peace propaganda, about eight male youth out of every ten state they would fall in line if they were called, while about one in every nine insists that he would refuse to go.

A great deal more effective and instructive than any words of ours are those of the youth themselves. "The action youth would take if war were declared" is far more graphically indicated by some of the following comments than by any of our tables.

"What's the difference? They'd shoot you here if you didn't go, and if you go you have a chance of coming back."

"Gotta die anyway . . . may as well enlist."

"Don't want to be called a slacker."

"If I saw a band marching down the street and flags flying, I'd fall in line."

"Any man who doesn't go to war is a coward."

"I'd like to get into a war to see how it is."

"I ain't patriotic, but I've been waitin' to go to a war for a long time. I want to have a bonus coming to me when I get older."

"God, you know how crazy people are when there's a lot of emotional strain and they start playing the Star Spangled Banner. I guess I'd volunteer like anyone else."

"It's one way to get a job."

"It would be fun fighting and I'd like to see new places."

"I'd be loyal to my country, even if it was in the wrong."

About a third of the youth would wait for the draft.

"I wouldn't go unless I had to."

"I'd make them pay me before I went."

"They'd have to make me go."

"Thank God my husband is deaf."

"Wait till the last minute."

"I'd be scared to death, but I'd go if drafted."

"No sense jumping into something to get your head knocked off."

Ten per cent stated they would go if invasion threatened.

"Not go overseas and meddle in other people's affairs."

"If they started drafting people and sending them overseas, I'd sneak away some place."

"When they come over here, I'll fight . . . when it's somewhere else, I'll hide."

About one male youth in every ten said he would refuse to go.

"Better a live coward than a dead hero."

"I'd cut my finger off so I couldn't shoot that gun."

"I told my husband I'd shoot him in the leg."

"I'd face a firing squad before I'd willingly go out and shoot people."

"I'd rather see him [husband] in his grave."

"I don't want no one-legged man."

"I'd go in the bush till the war blew over."

IS THERE A YOUTH PROBLEM?

Toward the close of the interview, each youth was asked to express himself freely on what he considered his most perplexing personal problem. Then, as a final question, he was asked, in a leisurely and informal way, whether or not he believed that there was such a thing as a "youth problem."

A comparison of the responses to these two questions reveals a fact that we have already pointed out—that youth, like so many adults, are impelled to interpret general problems in the light of their personal experiences. Although there were a few differences in the responses to these two questions, it is clear that, as a general rule, a young person believes that the basic problem confronting all youth is essentially the same as the problem which he personally has to face.

TABLE 98—YOUTH'S MOST PERPLEXING PERSONAL PROBLEMS COMPARED WITH THEIR OPINIONS ON WHAT CONSTITUTES THE YOUTH PROBLEM

Youth's own problem		Youth problem in general	
Type of problem	Percentage of youth	Type of problem	Percentage of youth
Economic security.....	66.6	Economic security.....	57.7
Education, vocational choice.....	13.1	Conduct or morals.....	11.1
Home.....	9.0	Education, vocational choice.....	10.6
Personality adjustment.....	3.2	Home.....	7.1
Social relations*.....	2.6	Recreation.....	4.9
Other.....	5.5	Other.....	8.6
Total.....	100.0	Total.....	100.0
Number of youth stating problem....	9,414	Number of youth stating problem....	8,111

* Social relations with the opposite sex.

Perhaps it should first be recorded that only one-fourth of the youth believed that there was *no* youth problem, while less than a third reported that they had no "perplexing personal problem" of their own. Of the youth who specified the nature of these problems, substantially more than half named some economic problem as the one that was giving them the greatest personal concern, as well as the one which they considered the basic problem of youth in general.

TABLE 99—OPINIONS OF YOUNG PEOPLE ON WHAT CONSTITUTES THE YOUTH PROBLEM

Classification of youth	Percentage of each group						Percentage base
	Economic	Conduct or morals	Education	Home	Recreation	Other	
All youth stating problem.....	57.7	11.1	10.6	7.1	4.9	8.6	8,111
Male: single.....	59.5	11.6	11.3	4.8	4.9	7.9	3,692
married.....	62.8	9.7	9.4	6.3	3.1	8.7	524
Female: single.....	54.7	9.9	12.1	7.9	5.4	10.0	2,663
married.....	56.1	12.7	5.8	12.5	5.0	7.9	1,232
White.....	58.3	10.9	10.5	7.1	4.7	8.5	7,160
Negro.....	52.9	12.3	10.6	7.0	6.5	10.7	951
16-year-olds.....	53.5	10.4	13.1	7.6	7.9	7.5	820
20-year-olds.....	58.6	10.1	10.3	7.4	4.0	9.6	1,009
24-year-olds.....	60.8	11.2	8.1	8.3	4.1	7.5	957
Relief.....	59.4	12.7	7.8	8.0	4.2	7.9	887
Nonrelief.....	57.5	10.9	11.0	6.9	5.0	8.7	7,183
Native parentage.....	57.1	11.3	10.8	7.5	4.3	9.0	5,916
Foreign-born parentage.....	63.4	9.1	9.3	5.3	6.6	6.3	1,219

It is significant that the factors which usually operate to color attitudes and opinions seem to have had little effect upon a youth's interpretation of what constitutes the youth problem. Table 99 reveals that, for most of the basic groups, the differences of opinion are almost negligible.

Whether one considers these interpretations of the general youth problem from the standpoint of sex, race, age, relief status, or parentage, one discovers but slight differences in the frequency of the various responses. While 58 per cent of the white youth considered the problem of their generation as essentially economic, 53 per cent of the Negro youth shared the same point of view. While 59 per cent of the youth from relief families defined the general youth problem as basically a matter of dollars and cents, 58 per cent of the youth from nonrelief families were of the same opinion. A comparable similarity appears in the frequency with which youth characterized the general problem as moral, educational, domestic, or recreational.

Considering the implications of a good deal of the data previously submitted, this belief that the nature of the youth problem is basically economic should surprise no one. It will be remembered, for example, that 54 per cent of the out-of-school youth had left school for economic reasons. The median weekly wage for all workers was under \$13. Large numbers were found to be vocationally maladjusted, and about one out of every five was totally unemployed. It is hardly surprising therefore that young people regard their own personal problems, as well as the basic problem of all youth, as essentially a matter of bread and butter.

Although there is a clear-cut tendency on the part of young people to emphasize the lack of economic security as the most serious problem confronting their generation, it can hardly be assumed that there is a monotonous uniformity in either their interpretations of the problem or the suggestions they offer for its possible solution. On no question did we get such a wealth of varied and colorful comments. Our space will permit the presentation of only a fraction of their spontaneous expressions of opinion.

"We can't get a job like other people used to before." Solution: "The government should pass some kind of law."

"Young people worry about where the next meal is coming from."

"Getting jobs is the main problem. Employers want experienced people, and I don't see how you can get experience if they won't give you a job."

"No work . . . no money . . . no good education . . . no good times . . . these are the problems that young people have to face."

"The problem is how to get married on \$15 a week."

"The main thing in any young person's mind is getting a job he likes. Financial security . . . there must be some answer, but it's way over my head. If so-called brain trusters can't do anything, I can't suggest anything."

"It used to be you could get a job anywhere, but now you can't hardly buy one."

"They [young people] have a feeling of defeatism because of the depression. Buck them up! Make them feel the country is not neglecting them."

"The general problem is economic—the problem of finding a suitable permanent job. The so-called moral problems are the result of the failure of the older generation to guard their own conduct and to teach children how to live."

"There is nothing to do when you get out of school. There should be shorter hours and give more people a chance to work."

"The problem is one of having a fair chance—the possibility of getting somewhere. I feel very strongly about young people who are clever and yet who will be stunted by economic conditions. By the time you are twenty-two, you are no longer young. The youth of America will have to wake up and organize themselves. Other people won't help if youth does nothing for itself . . . here I've been saying things I've never said out loud before. I enjoyed it."

"A fellow wants to have a good time and have a little spending money. You go crazy if you hang around the same block with nothing to do. Work is the only solution. How you get it, I don't know."

According to about 10 per cent of the youth, the basic problem that faces their generation is not economic, but moral.

"Some are too wise in sexual matters. They are doing things they will be sorry for. Drinking is one reason for this. They won't be frightened or won't learn until they get into a scrape."

"Young people smoke and drink too much just because they think it is smart."

"Sex education is a big problem in the life of any youth, and I think such education should begin as soon as the child is old enough to understand."

"Boys and girls are wild these days. They get that way from following older people."

"Girls worry too much about love."

"Social relations with opposite sex is the main problem. If you love a girl and she don't love you, it's awful."

"The trouble with most boys is that they try to act like the gangsters they see in the movies."

Another 10 per cent believed that the problem was essentially a matter of education.

"Young people worry most about what their futures are going to be." Solution: "An adequate system of personal vocational guidance in the schools."

"They ought to have a course in school on how to go about getting a job. One ought to know how to approach an employer, how to ask for a job, and where to look for it."

"The government should continue its help so that those who can't afford higher education could get it free."

"When youth want to quit school, let them quit and don't force them to go. It drives me nuts to sit in school when you are not learning anything."

"Everybody should have a chance to take a college education. The more education you get, the better you are able to face life."

"Young people stop school too soon because parents can't afford to keep them there. A provision should be made to allow them to go through at least high school."

"Educational programs are too full of frills. Young people are not trained; they are merely put through school."

"Those who do not appreciate it have a chance of education, but those who really need it cannot get it."

And others:

"Youth is in a muddle. Out of school too young; they don't know what they want to do or why. They are in the midst of a great social and economic change."

"Young people very restless because economic conditions are making the future uncertain. Most of them aren't free to marry and establish a home because they have no financial security. They feel that life is somewhat futile and that there is no use in struggling for anything, as no one knows what the future holds."

"Young people having a tough time getting jobs. Those that they get don't pay well enough to enable them to get married or to do other things they want to do. There are more people than there are jobs. Many elderly people who aren't able to work have to keep on working anyhow, as they have nothing to fall back on. Meanwhile, the young people who are idle are getting into trouble because they have nothing to do."

"Young people have had to do a great deal of thinking for and about themselves, so if older people would make a greater effort to consider and respect their opinions and ideas, instead of robbing them of self-confidence and killing ambition by constantly reminding them that they are 'too young' to know what they are talking about or too young for real responsibility, youth would be far better off than they are today."

"If people would either let young people alone or actually do something for them instead of just talking about it, youth might have a chance."

SUMMARY

In summarizing the attitudes and opinions of young people, as revealed by the present study, we would stress the fact that most of the youth interviewed had opinions on the various topics discussed, and that they were willing, and often anxious, to express themselves. If space permitted, we could have included many times the number of verbatim quotations in which the youth colorfully and vigorously presented their points of view.

Wages. On the matter of wages, we found the majority of the youth of the opinion that wage rates generally were too low, and that governmental action was the best means of raising them. When asked directly if the government should set minimum wage and maximum hour standards for business and industry, three-fourths of them said that it should.

Relief. Ninety per cent believed that the provision of relief for the needy unemployed was a responsibility in which the federal government should participate. They were equally emphatic in their opinions that the relief provided should be on a "health and decency" level, and that it should be given for labor performed, not as a direct grant.

Child Labor. Again the young people were almost unanimous in favoring government regulation of the gainful employment of children 14 and 15 years old. Less than 5 per cent said the government should "keep hands off." The others were divided equally, half believing in the complete abolition of child labor, while the other half considered it permissible under certain circumstances, largely economic in character.

The Suffrage. Taking up the matter of the suffrage, we discovered that slightly more than half of the 22- to 24-year-old group had availed themselves of the privilege of voting when they last had the opportunity. Indifference stood out as the chief reason for the youth's failure to vote. When asked if, in their opinion, candidates were usually elected to public office because of their capability to fill the office, somewhat more than half the youth thought they were. Almost a third, however, felt that this was infrequently or never the case.

Employment of Married Women. In considering the question of gainful employment of married women who want to work, one-sixth of the youth voiced no objection whatever, one-eighth would completely exclude them from the labor market, and more than two-thirds would permit their employment under certain conditions.

Drinking. More than half the youth admitted that, with varying degrees of frequency and moderation, they indulged in some kind of alcoholic beverage. One-fifth were unqualifiedly opposed to drinking, and somewhat more than a fourth, though not drinkers themselves, were not opposed to others drinking. Drinking was indulged in by large numbers of boys and girls under 21, more than half the boys and almost two-fifths of the girls admitting that they drank.

War. The majority of the youth voiced the opinion that war was both needless and preventable. Few showed any enthusiasm for war, but only one in six said that he would refuse to go. The majority would follow the course of least resistance and go if they were drafted.

The Youth Problem. As youth themselves see it, the "youth problem" is largely a matter of economic security. In many respects, their conception of the basic problems that confront their generation has been reflected in the conclusions that have been set down in various sections of this report.

It seems to us, as apparently it seems to them, that the most pressing problems, involving the need for the most vigorous social action, fall into three general areas:

1. *Employment.* For hundreds of thousands of youth in America, this means getting a job. For as many others, it means a wage that will provide both an acceptable standard of living, and an opportunity to provide for future years.

2. *Education.* For large numbers who have been forced out of school for economic reasons, this means the creation of a less fictitious equality of opportunity, and, for many others who are still in school, it means an educational program that is more clearly in harmony with their interests and needs.

3. *Recreation.* For no less than millions of young people in America, this calls for an awakening, on the part of communities, to the social as well as the personal values of healthful and satisfying recreation, and a determination to develop leisure-time programs that will not only absorb energies that often lead to delinquent behavior, but which will add something valuable to the spiritual stature of those who participate in them.

APPENDIX

BASIC TOTALS FOR THE PRIMARY GROUPS OF YOUTH INTERVIEWED

Interviewers secured information from each of the 13,528 youth with respect to area, sex, marital status, race, and age. Not every one of these youth, however, answered all of the succeeding questions in the schedule, and those who failed to answer were usually excluded from the percentage base for that particular question. Hence the percentage base is usually somewhat smaller than 13,528.

Likewise, information was not recorded for every youth with respect to locality, employment status, religion of parents, relief status of immediate family during the preceding twelve months, etc. Again, those youth for whom information was not recorded were excluded from the percentage base of each of these groups. Youth who failed to answer a specific question were also excluded in considering that question.

For example, the locality of residence was not recorded for 17 youth, which left 13,511 youth with known residence. When asked what they would do in case of war, 64 of these 13,511 did not answer, which left 13,447 youth upon which the percentages of the various responses were based. The numbers of youth failing to report were generally quite small. Since they varied from question to question, however, the total net number of youth on which percentages were based also varied with each question.

Of course, the basic totals are approximately 13,528 only when *all* youth are included in an analysis. When *specific groups* are considered, only the youth in those groups are used, as, for example, 10,884 out-of-school youth, 6,889 male youth, and 6,272 employed youth.

Because of limited space, it was not possible to show on every table the numbers of youth on which the percentages were based. For this reason, the following basic totals have been included as an aid to understanding the percentages presented.

BASIC TOTALS FOR THE PRIMARY GROUPS OF YOUTH INTERVIEWED

	Number	Per cent		Number	Per cent
AREA			EDUCATION—NONSTUDENTS		
Baltimore	4,452	32.9	Less than 6th grade	739	6.8
Counties	9,076	67.1	6th grade	747	6.9
All Maryland youth	13,528	100.0	7th grade	1,519	14.0
SEX AND MARITAL STATUS			8th grade	1,254	11.5
Male	6,889	50.9	9th grade	1,051	9.6
Single	5,987	44.3	10th or 11th not graduate	1,520	14.0
Married	902	6.6	11th grade graduate	1,014	9.3
Female	6,639	49.1	12th grade graduate	1,874	17.2
Single	4,422	32.7	1 year beyond high school	349	3.2
Married	2,217	16.4	2 or 3 years beyond	421	3.9
All youth	13,528	100.0	4 or more years beyond	396	3.6
RACE			Nonstudents reporting	10,884	100.0
White	11,441	84.6	RELIGION OF PARENTS		
Negro	2,087	15.4	Protestant	8,908	66.5
All youth	13,528	100.0	Catholic	2,511	18.7
AGE			Mixed affiliations	1,147	8.6
16	1,514	11.2	Jewish	490	3.7
17	1,423	10.5	No affiliation	340	2.5
18	1,483	11.0	Youth reporting	13,396	100.0
19	1,656	12.2	YOUTH'S OCCUPATION		
20	1,643	12.1	Professional-technical	411	6.6
21	1,620	12.0	Managerial	253	4.0
22	1,401	10.4	Office-sales	1,553	24.7
23	1,242	9.2	Skilled	241	3.8
24	1,546	11.4	Semi-skilled	1,472	23.5
All youth	13,528	100.0	Unskilled	1,041	16.6
LOCALITY OF RESIDENCE			Domestic-personal	669	10.7
Farm	2,846	21.1	Federal project	332	5.3
Village (under 2,500)	3,059	22.7	Other ^b	300	4.8
Town (2,500 to 15,000)	1,587	11.7	All employed youth ^a	6,272	100.0
City (over 25,000)	6,019	44.5	FATHER'S OCCUPATION		
Youth reporting	13,511	100.0	Professional-technical	752	5.6
SCHOOL AND EMPLOYMENT			Managerial	2,151	15.9
Students	2,620	19.4	Office	664	4.9
Nonstudents	10,893	80.6	Sales	522	3.9
Employed ^a	6,272	46.4	Skilled	3,082	22.8
Unemployed	2,629	19.5	Semi-skilled	1,520	11.2
Homemakers	1,746	12.9	Unskilled	1,287	9.5
Voluntarily idle	246	1.8	Domestic-personal	384	2.8
Youth reporting	13,513	100.0	Farm owner-tenant	2,113	15.6
RELIEF AND NONRELIEF			Farm laborer	504	3.7
Relief: white	1,138	8.5	Other and unknown	549	4.1
Relief: Negro	500	3.7	All youth	13,528	100.0
Nonrelief: white	10,255	76.3			
Nonrelief: Negro	1,551	11.5			
Youth reporting	13,444	100.0			

^aNonstudents employed at least 5 hours week preceding interview.

^bLargely unpaid family workers living on farms.

LIST OF TABLES

Table Number	Page
1. Characteristics of the Maryland Sample Compared with Characteristics of the National Youth Population	12
2. Usual Occupation of Youth's Father	22
3. Median Number of Living Children in Parental Family	23
4. Extent to Which Parents Need the Youth's Financial Help	26
5. Conveniences Available at the Youth's Residence and Those Homes Having No Conveniences Whatever	32
6. Median Number of Children Desired	36
7. Age of Male and Female Youth at Time of Marriage	43
8. Youth Who Are Married, According to Their Fathers' Usual Occupations	44
9. Age Distribution of the Students Interviewed	52
10. Kind of School Students Were Attending	53
11. Median Age of All Out-of-School Youth at Time of Interview	54
12. Proportion of Youth of Each Age Group Who Are Permanently Out of School	55
13. Highest Grade Successfully Completed by Out-of-School Youth	56
14. The Percentages of Out-of-School Youth of Various Groups Who Did <i>Not</i> Go Beyond the Eighth Grade	58
15. Relation of Fathers' Occupations to the Proportions of Youth Who Did <i>Not</i> Go Beyond the Eighth Grade	60
16. Proportions of Out-of-School Youth in Various Groups Who Completed Specified Grades	61
17. Relation of Fathers' Occupations to the Proportions of Youth who Did <i>Not</i> Complete High School	61
18. Reasons Given by Youth for Leaving School	64
19. Extent of Part-Time Education Taken by Youth Permanently Out of School and Their Reasons for Taking It	68
20. Types of Vocational Training Desired by Out-of-School Youth	71
21. Extent to Which Youth Have Received Vocational Guidance	74
22. Proportions of Youth in Specified Grade Levels Who Had Received Vocational Guidance	75
23. Source and Youth's Evaluation of Vocational Guidance Received	76
24. Relation between Vocational Guidance Received and Youth's Appraisal of the Economic Value of Their Schooling	78
25. Youth's Appraisal of the Economic Value of Their Schooling	82
26. Youth's Appraisal of the Cultural Value of Their Schooling	86
27. Attitude toward Sex Education in Schools	90
28. Out-of-School Youth Who Completed Specified Grades, According to the Occupations of Their Fathers	92
29. Occupational Distribution of Out-of-School Employed Youth According to the School Grades They Had Completed	93

Table Number	Page
30. Median School Grade Completed by Employed Out-of-School Youth According to the Youth's Occupational Field	94
31. Occupational Distribution of Employed Youth According to the Grades They had Completed in School	95
32. Median Ages at Which Youth Got Their First Full-time Jobs after Leaving School at Specified Grades	97
33. Employment Status of All Youth at Time of Interview According to Age at Last Birthday	105
34. Employment Status of the Youth in the Labor Market According to Age	106
35. Occupational Distribution of All Employed Youth	107
36. Estimated Yearly Earnings of Various Groups	110
37. Median Weekly Wage Received by Employed White and Negro Youth Working Part Time or Full Time	112
38. Median Weekly Wages and Hours of Employed Out-of-School Youth by Occupation	113
39. Median Weekly Wages of Employed White Male and Female Youth According to Their Occupational Fields	114
40. Median Weekly Wages of Employed Negro Youth According to Occupational Field	114
41. Median Weekly Wages of Inside Salespersons According to Age and Sex	116
42. Median Weekly Wages of Employed White Youth According to Present Age	118
43. Median Weekly Wages and Hours of All Employed Youth by Locality of Residence	119
44. Distribution of Employed Youth According to Weekly Wages Received	119
45. Median Weekly Wages and Hours of Out-of-School Employed Youth	120
46. Median Weekly Wages and Hours of Out-of-School Employed Youth by Grade Completed	121
47. Median Weekly Wages of Employed Male and Female Out-of-School Youth According to Grade Completed	122
48. Present Occupation of Elementary, High School, and College Graduates	123
49. Extent to Which Employed Male Youth in Specific Occupations Considered Themselves Underpaid	126
50. Extent to Which Female Youth in Specific Occupations Considered Themselves Underpaid	127
51. Extent to Which Employed Youth Regarded Themselves as Employed on Dead-end Jobs	128
52. Actual and Preferred Occupations of Employed Youth	132
53. The Jobs Youth Want and the Jobs They Get	134
54. Percentage of Youth Who Preferred the Occupational Field in Which They Were Employed	134
55. Extent to Which Youth Employed in Certain Occupations Preferred Those Occupations	135
56. The Proportions of Youth, Living in Various Localities, Who Got Their First Full-time Jobs Before They Were 18 Years of Age	138
57. Median Ages at First Full-time Jobs and Percentages Starting to Work Before 16 Years of Age	141
58. Residence of Youth Who Got Their First Full-time Jobs Before They Were 16 Years Old	141

Table Number	Page
59. Residence of Employed and Unemployed Youth.....	145
60. Sex and Marital Status of the Employed and Unemployed Youth.....	145
61. Average Period of Time Since Unemployed Youth, Who Never had Full-time Jobs Left School	147
62. Extent to Which Male and Female Unemployed Youth Actively Sought Work During the Week Preceding the Interview.....	151
63. Relation of Employed Youth's Wage to His Father's Occupation.....	156
64. Principal Leisure-Time Activities of Youth According to Sex.....	162
65. Principal Leisure-Time Activities of Youth According to Race.....	164
66. Principal Leisure-Time Activities of Farm Youth According to Sex and Race.....	164
67. Principal Leisure-Time Activities of Out-of-School Youth According to the School Grades They Completed.....	166
68. Extent to Which Youth Belonged to Clubs.....	168
69. Youth's Estimate of the Amount of Self-Government There Should Be in Youth Organizations	170
70. Usual Response of Youth to Movies.....	171
71. Type of Movie Preferred by Youth, According to Sex and Marital Status.....	172
72. Availability of Public Library, by Race and Residence.....	173
73. Use of Available Public Library During Preceding Year.....	174
74. Extent to Which Youth Used Available Library Services, According to the Occupations of Their Fathers.....	179
75. Reasons Given for Not Using Available Library Services.....	179
76. Extent to Which Youth Thought Community Recreation Was Adequate or Inadequate	181
77. Specific Recreational Needs of the Community as Indicated by the Youth Believing Recreation Inadequate	183
78. Opportunities Which Community Should Provide for Youth to Meet Persons of the Opposite Sex	185
79. What Communities Might Do to Keep Young People Out of Trouble.....	187
80. Church Affiliation of the Youth's Parents by Race.....	194
81. Race and Birthplace of Parents of Different Religious Groups.....	194
82. Church Membership of Youth.....	196
83. Church Membership of Youth According to Locality of Residence.....	197
84. Relation of Sex and Marital Status to Church Attendance.....	198
85. Frequency with Which Sermons Should Deal with Political and Economic Problems	202
86. Youth's Evaluation of General Wage Levels.....	212
87. Means of Raising Wages Suggested by Youth Believing Them Too Low.....	213
88. Extent to Which Governments Should Regulate Minimum Wages and Maximum Hours in Industry	218
89. Extent to Which Relief of the Needy Unemployed Is Regarded as a Valid Responsi- bility of Government	222
90. Level of Relief Favored by Youth Who Considered It a Valid Responsibility of Government	223

Table Number	Page
91. Type of Relief Favored by Youth Who Considered It a Valid Responsibility of Government	223
92. Extent to Which Government Should Permit Gainful Labor of Children 14 and 15 Years Old	226
93. Extent to Which Youth 22 to 24 Years of Age Voted at Their Last Opportunity.....	229
94. Methods by Which Candidates are Elected to Public Office.....	232
95. Attitude of Youth toward the Drinking of Intoxicating Beverages.....	238
96. Attitude of Male and Female Youth toward War.....	241
97. Action Youth Would Take in Case of War.....	246
98. Youth's Most Perplexing Personal Problems Compared with Their Opinions on What Constitutes the Youth Problem.....	250
99. Opinions of Young People on What Constitutes the Youth Problem.....	250

LIST OF FIGURES

Figure Number	Page
1. Home Situation of Farm and Nonfarm Youth.....	19
2. Stability of the Home in Relation to Race and Relief.....	20
3. How Religion is Related to Broken Homes.....	21
4. How Father's Occupation Affected Going to the Dentist.....	29
5. Net Change in Residence of Youth if They Lived Where They Wanted To.....	38
6. Extent of Marriage Among Out-of-School Youth.....	46
7. Sex and Race as Factors in School Grade Attainment.....	62
8. Out-of-School Youth Estimate the Economic Value of Their Schooling.....	84
9. Relation between Wages and Hours of White and Negro Youth.....	112
10. Attitude of Employed Youth toward Wages Received.....	125
11. Attitude of Employed Youth toward Possibilities of Present Job.....	130
12. Extent to Which Unemployed Youth Had Registered for Jobs.....	150
13. Extent to Which Youth Follow the Occupations of Their Fathers.....	155
14. Extent to Which Students and Nonstudents Belonged to Clubs.....	169
15. Extent to Which Farm and Nonfarm Youth Used Available Public Library.....	176
16. Extent to Which Youth of Different Grade Levels Used Available Public Library....	178
17. Can Your Community Do Anything to Keep Young People Out of Trouble?.....	186
18. How Religion of Parents is Related to High School Graduation of Youth.....	195
19. How Often Do Youth Attend Church?.....	198
20. How Much Did Youth Participate in Church Recreational Programs?.....	203
21. When Should the Government Permit Child Labor?.....	227
22. Should Married Women Accept Gainful Employment?.....	223
23. Do Youth Drink?.....	239

LIST OF PICTORIAL GRAPHS

	Page
Do Employed Youth Contribute to the Support of Their Parents?	27
Extent to Which Youth Have Received Dental Care during Past Year	31
Home Conveniences of White and Negro Youth	33
Do Homes of Youth Have Modern Conveniences?	35
What is the Ideal Number of Children?	37
To What Extent Are Youth Dissatisfied with Where They Live?	39
The Chief Source of Sex Education—Home or Street?	41
How Many Children Do Married Youth Have?	45
Relation of Fathers' Occupations to the Amount of Education Their Children Received	59
Why Do Youth Leave School?	65
Are Out-of-School Youth Receiving Part-time Education?	69
To What Extent Do Youth Receive Vocational Guidance from Schools?	73
How Youth Evaluate the Vocational Guidance They Are Receiving or Have Received from Their Schools	77
Does Education Pay?	83
What About Sex Education in Schools?	89
Percentage of Youth Receiving Specified Weekly Wages	109
The Wages Received and Hours Worked by Youth on Various Jobs	111
Median Weekly Wages Employed White Youth Received on Various Kinds of Jobs	115
The Wages Employed Youth Receive and the Hours They Work per Week	117
Do Youth Believe Their Jobs Offer Opportunities for Advancement?	129
The Jobs Youth Want and the Jobs They Get	133
Age at Which Out-of-School Youth Secured First Full-time Jobs	139
Are Unemployed Youth Registered in Employment Agencies?	149
Relation of Fathers' Occupations to the Wages Their Employed Children Receive	153
Principal Leisure-Time Activity of Farm Youth	163
Do Youth Belong to Clubs?	167
What about Public Libraries?	175
Do Youth Use Public Libraries?	177
Going to Church—Those Who Do and Those Who Don't	199
What about Wages?	211
If Wages Are Too Low, by What Means, or Agency, Can They Best Be Raised?	215
Should Government Regulate Wages and Hours?	217
Is Relief a Problem of Government?	221
Should Government Prohibit the Gainful Labor of Children under 16 Years of Age?	225
Should Married Women Work?	235
What about Drinking?	237
WAR! What Youth Would Do If War Were Declared	243
Who Would Refuse to Go to War?	245
Does Education Affect Behavior in Case of War?	247

American Youth Commission

MARYLAND YOUTH SURVEY SCHEDULE NO. 1 *

Date _____ County _____

Interviewer _____ District _____

(Last Name) (First Name) (Street Address or R. F. D.)

Bal—Cum—T—R F—NF Maryland

(Place of Residence) (Type) (Farm—Non-Farm) (County) (State)

Census

9—Age at last birthday _____

_____ Date of birth _____

10—Sex: M—F

_____ Marital status: S—M—Sep—W—D—NR

11—Color: W—N—O

_____ Place of birth _____

12—Place of Birth of Parents

(Father) (Mother)

School

13—Present School and Employment Status

X No response

A—Attending Full Time Day School (or interviewed during summer vacation, planning to return to F T D S in fall)

O Now in F T D S and employed

1 Now in F T D S, not employed

2 Vacationing from F T D S, employed

3 Vacationing from F T D S, not employed

B—Permanently left F T D S (youth interviewed during summer vacation was in F T D S preceding term, but does not plan to return)

4 Was in F T D S, now employed full time

5 Was in F T D S, now employed part time

6 Was in F T D S, not employed

C—Permanently left F T D S (all youth permanently out of F T D S, except those in B above)

7 Left F T D S, employed full time

8 Left F T D S, employed part time

9 Left F T D S, not employed

14—Type of Full Time Day School Last Attended

X No response

O Public elementary

1 Public junior high

2 Public senior high

3 Public vocational—course _____

4 Private non-sectarian academic

5 Private non-sectarian vocational

6 Private Protestant

7 Private Catholic

8 College

_____ 9 None Name of school _____

15—Highest Grade Successfully Completed in Full Time Day School

_____ Grade _____ Mo. & Yr. left F T D S _____

16—Reasons for Leaving Full Time Day School

X No response

O Still in F T D S

1 Lack of funds

2 To earn own money

3 Lack of interest

4 Disciplinary difficulties

5 Subjects too difficult

6 To marry

7 Feeling of completion on graduation

_____ 8 Other _____

17—During present (or past) school term did you attend part time school and was your reason primarily vocational or cultural? (Limited to those permanently out of full time day school or college)

X No response

Y In F T D S now (or last term, planning or not planning to return)

O No part time school attended

1 Public (free) evening school (vocational)

2 Public (free) evening school (cultural)

3 Private (tuition) evening school (vocational)

4 Private (tuition) evening school (cultural)

5 Univ. or U. extension classes (vocational)

6 Univ. or U. extension classes (cultural)

7 Correspondence course (vocational)

8 Correspondence course (cultural)

_____ 9 Other _____

_____ Name of School _____

* A 26-page manual of instructions for interviewers was prepared for use in filling out this schedule. Included were suggestions for approaching interviewees, definitions of terms, explanations of abbreviations, etc.

18—*Would you take vocational training if available? (Limited to those permanently out of full time day school or college)*

X No response

Y In F T D S now (or last term, planning to return)

0 No (why).....

1 Yes (what).....

2 Is now taking vocational training

.....3 Does not know

19—*Most Important Source of Vocational Guidance and Degree of Help in Determining Vocation*

X No response

0 No guidance

1 School official—helpful

2 School official—not helpful

3 School official—does not know

4 Public employment agency—helpful

5 Public employment agency—not helpful

6 Private employment agency—helpful

7 Private employment agency—not helpful

.....8 Other

20—*Attitude on School (Economic Assistance)*

A Do you feel that your education helped or will help you to earn a living?

X No response

0 No help

1 Little help

2 Fair amount of help

3 Considerable help

4 Great help

5 No opinion

.....6 Other

21—*Attitude on School (Fuller Life)*

A Do you feel that your education helped or will help you to enjoy life more?

X No response

0 No help

1 Little help

2 Fair amount of help

3 Considerable help

4 Great help

5 No opinion

.....6 Other

Employment

22-23—*Regardless of available opportunities, what kind of work would you most like to do?*

24—*Age at which first full time job was secured*

X No response

0 No full time job—could not find

1 No full time job—F T D S student and other

.....Age job secured..... Mo. & yr.....

25-26—*Present Gainful Occupation*

Private Industry

Operation

Federal project (specify)

27—*Past Week's Income on Job of #25-26*

.....Income \$.....

6 NR 7 Average 8 More 9 Less Y No job
(Coded under 36)

28—*Hours worked in past week for which above income was*

.....received

29—*To what extent do you feel that you are paid what you are worth?*

X No response

0 No job

1 Greatly overpaid

2 Slightly overpaid

3 Paid what you are worth

4 Properly paid, but worthy of better job

5 Slightly underpaid

6 Greatly underpaid

7 No opinion

.....8 Other

30—*If you feel wages of workers are generally too low, what is the most effective way of raising them? (Greater individual effort, labor unions, government regulation, new economic system, etc.)*

31—*If you are employed, do you feel secure in your job?*

X No response

Y No job or F T D S student

0 Yes

.....1 No (why).....

32—To what extent does your present job offer opportunities for future advancement?

- X No response
- O No job or F T D S student
- 1 Dead end job
- 2 Offers limited opportunities
- 3 Offers great opportunities
-4 Does not know

33—Not Working (Limited to those not in full time day school) Main reason for not working at present

- X No response
- Y Employed
- O F T D S student
- 1 No available jobs
- 2 Lack of training
- 3 Lack of experience
- 4 Lack of training and experience
- 5 Lack of influence
- 6 Occupied with home duties
- 7 Does not need work (why).....
- 8 Unemployable (why).....
-9 Other

34—Registration for Employment

- X No response
- O No registration—employed or not looking for work
- 1 No registration—unemployed
- 2 Public employment agency
- 3 Private employment agency
- 4 Private employers
- 5 Both 2 and 3
- 6 Both 2 and 4
- 7 Both 3 and 4
-8 All three

35—Unemployed Seeking Full Time Work or Not (Limited to those not in full time day school; response qualified by interviewers' impressions)

- X No response
- Y Employed
- O F T D S student
- 1 Actively seeking
- 2 Not actively, but would accept
- 3 Not desirous of employment

Reason:.....

-4 Other

36—Under what circumstances should employment be accepted by married women?

- X No response
- O Under any circumstances
- 1 When family income is inadequate
- 2 Other permissive circum.....
- 3 Under no circumstances

-4 No opinion

(Line 3 of #27 coded here)

37—Government Participation in Relief

A If a needy person wants work but cannot find it, to what extent is his or his family's support a responsibility of government?

- X No response
- O No government responsibility
- 1 Health and decency level, direct relief
- 2 Bare subsistence, direct relief
- 3 Health and decency level, work relief
- 4 Bare subsistence, work relief
- 5 Other

-6 No opinion

38—In reference to fixing minimum wages and maximum hours, to what degree should government participate?

- X No response
- O Regulate all business and industry
- 1 Regulate only "big business"
- 2 Regulate only child labor
- 3 Leave all alone
- 4 No opinion

-5 Other

39—Under what circumstances, if any, should government permit the gainful labor of children under 16?

- X No response
- O Under no circumstances
- 1 When family needs help
- 2 When youth wants own money
- 3 When youth attains.....grade
- 4 When further school progress impossible
- 5 No concern of government
- 6 No opinion

-7 Other

Home Life

40—Residence

- X No response
- O With parents or relatives in owned home
- 1 With parents or relatives in rented single family home
- 2 With parents or relatives in rented double family home
- 3 With parents or relatives in apartment
- 4 In personally owned home with parents
- 5 In personally owned home without parents
- 6 In personally rented quarters with parents
- 7 In personally rented quarters without parents
- 8 Institution
- 9 C C C

-Y Other

41—Would you leave home if you could? (Limited to single youth living with parents)

- X No response
- Y Married
- O Single, not living with parents
- 1 No

-2 Yes (why).....

42—*Marital Status of Parents*

- X No response
O Does not know
1 Parents alive and living together
2 Parents dead
3 Father dead
4 Mother dead
5 Father deserted
6 Mother deserted
7 Parents divorced
8 Parents separated

9 Other

43—Number of living brothers and sisters

_____(include self)

44—Usual Occupation of Father

[illegible]

Operation

Industry

45—*Present Occupation of Usual Breadwinner*

(Specify breadwinner) _____

- X No response
Y Youth is usual breadwinner
O On federal relief project
1 In own business
2 On private job F T
3 On private job P T
4 Governmental work
5 Unemployed, why
6 Unemployable, why
7 Not looking for work, why

46—Have you or your immediate family received relief during past year?

- X No response
Y Does not know
O No relief
1 Work relief
2 Direct relief
3 Both
4 Private agency

5 Private and public

47—*Extent of parents' dependence upon youth and his attitude toward meeting this obligation*

- X No response
0 Youth unable to help
1 Youth unwilling to help
2 Youth's help unnecessary
3 Partial dependence—met cheerfully

- 4 Partial dependence—with resignation
5 Partial dependence—with hostility
6 Total dependence—met cheerfully
7 Total dependence—with resignation
8 Total dependence—with hostility

9 Other

48—Number of interviewee's living children

Date married.....

49—Assuming that circumstances were ideal, how many children would you like to have?

- X No response
O Undecided as to number
1 Undecided as to any
2 None
3 One
4 Two
5 Three
6 Four
7 Five
8 Six
9 Seven

.....Y Eight or more

50—Home Conveniences

- X No response
O Radio
1 Bathroom
2 Electricity
3 Newspapers (subscribes)
4 Magazines (subscribes)
5 Automobile
6 Piano
7 Other musical instrument
8 Central heating

_____9 No conveniences

51—Where Would You Prefer to Live?

- X No response
O No preference
1 Farm
2 Village
3 Town
4 City
5 Suburbs

6 Other

Health

52—Characterize your present physical condition as

- X No response
0 Poor
1 Fair
2 Good

3 Excellent

53—What is your main physical trouble, if any?

54—Did you go to the dentist during the past year, and what was your reason for going?

- X No response
- O Went because of pain
- 1 Went because of schedule habit
- 2 Went, sent by school
- 3 Did not go, could not afford
- 4 Did not go, other

When did you last go to a dentist

55—When you were last seriously ill, did you have

- X No response
- O Never been ill
- 1 No medical attention, could not afford
- 2 No medical attention, other
- 3 Services of private physician
- 4 Services of clinic
- 5 Both private physician and clinic

6 Other

56—In what respects, if any, do you feel that your past or present illness or physical disability has retarded your progress?

- X No response
- O No illness, no retardation
- 1 Illness, but no retardation
- 2 Retarded educationally
- 3 Retarded vocationally
- 4 Retarded socially
- 5 Both 2 and 3
- 6 Both 2 and 4
- 7 Both 3 and 4
- 8 All three

9 Other retardation

Recreation

57—Three kinds of leisure time activities in which most time was spent during past year

1 2 3

58—What would you consider the most valuable additions your community could make to its present recreational program? (Name in order of desirability)

1 2 3

59—Name in order of greatest participation the clubs or organizations of which you are at present a member

60—To what extent should young people's organizations be governed by youth themselves?

- X No response
- O No self government
- 1 Slight self government
- 2 Much self government
- 3 Total self government
- 4 No opinion

61—Favorite Type of Movie

- X No response
- O Mystery
- 1 Western
- 2 Gangster-G Men
- 3 Love story
- 4 "Comedy of manners"
- 5 Musical comedy
- 6 Historical-classical
- 7 News, travel, education
- 8 No preference—likes several
- 9 No preference—dislikes all

Y Other

62—How do you respond to movie programs generally?

- I. X No response
- O Never goes
- 1 Enthusiastic generally
- 2 Satisfied generally
- 3 Enjoy few, tolerate others
- 4 Dislike all

II. Why do you go to movies?

- 5 No response
- 6 Positive enjoyment
- 7 Sociability
- 8 Nothing else to do
- 9 Seldom or never go

Y Other

63—Use of Libraries (multiple choice)

- X No response
- O No public library available
- 1 Available but do not use, why
- 2 Have public library book now
- 3 Use public library but find inadequate
- 4 Used public library during past year

5 Other

Church Affiliation

64—Church Affiliation of Youth's Parents

Father	Mother
Is youth's affiliation different from that of parents?	
X No response	
O No	
.....1 Yes	

65—Church Membership and Attendance

X No response
 O Member—attends never
 1 Member—attends holidays only
 2 Member—attends once a month
 3 Member—attends once a week
 4 No member—attends never
 5 No member—attends holidays only
 6 No member—attends once a month
7 No member—attends once a week

66—In what phase of a church's social or recreational program do you participate?

X No response
 O Unaware of such program
 1 Reg. participation in Y. P. organizations
 2 Occ. participation in Y. P. organizations
 3 No participation in Y. P. organizations
 4 Reg. participation in church recreational program
 5 Occ. participation in church recreational program
 6 No participation in church recreational program
 7 Participates in both
8 Participates in neither

67—How often should sermons deal with current governmental and economic problems?

X No response
 O Every week
 1 Once a month
 2 Times of crisis only
 3 Never
 4 No opinion
5 Other

68—When you are worried or in trouble, to whom do you usually go for help?

X No response
 O No one
 1 Parents, brothers or sisters
 2 Minister
 3 Sunday School teacher
 4 School official
 5 Organization leader
6 Other

Additional Attitude and Factual Questions

69—A War is

A X No response
 O A needless and preventable occurrence
 1 A necessary evil—does not know why
 2 A necessary evil—trade
 3 A necessary evil—human nature
 4 A justifiable means of expansion
 5 A justifiable act of retaliation
 6 An opportunity for personal advancement
 7 A glorious personal adventure
 8 No opinion

9 Other

70—In case war is declared, would you (or would you advise your brother or husband to)

X No response
 O Volunteer immediately
 1 Volunteer—"they'd get me anyway"
 2 Go if drafted
 3 Go if invasion threatened
 4 Go if drafted, or if invasion threatened
 5 Seek official exemption
 6 Refuse to go
 7 Perform only non-combatative service
 8 Does not know

9 Other

71—How frequently are capable men elected to public office?

X No response
 O Never
 1 Infrequently
 2 Frequently
 3 Always
 4 No opinion
 (If not by merit, how do candidates win?)

72—Main Reason for Voting or not Voting at Last Opportunity

X No response
 Y Too young to vote at last election
 O Voted, duty as citizen
 1 Voted, party allegiance
 2 Voted, other.....
 3 Voted, no reason given
 4 Did not vote, not interested
 5 Did not vote, one vote futile
 6 Did not vote, no basis for intelligent choice
 7 Did not vote, dissatisfied with candidates
 8 Did not vote, other.....
 9 Did not vote, no reason given

73—*Attitude toward Drinking*

- A X No response
 O Opposed to drinking generally
 1 Does not drink but not opposed
 2 Drinks
3 Other

74—*Do you think there is anything your community could do to keep young people out of trouble?*

- X No response
 O Does not know
 1 No
2 Yes (what)

75—*Opportunities community provides for meeting persons of opposite sex*

- X No response
 O Adequate
 1 Inadequate; should provide (name in order, most desirable first)

 1 Most desirable 2 Next most 3

76—*Chief Source of Sex Education*

- X No response
 O Home and parents
 1 Contemporaries
 2 School
 3 Clinic or doctor
 4 Clubs
 5 Church
6 Other

77—*Sex Education in School—Desirability and School Level*

- X No response
 O Not to be taught in schools
 1 To begin in elementary schools
 2 To begin in high school
 3 To begin in college
 4 Should be taught—does not know where to begin
5 No opinion

78—*What delayed or is delaying your marriage?*

- X No response
 O No delay—never seriously considered
 1 No delay—marriage was not, and plans are not being delayed
 2 Delayed—no opportunity
 3 Delay—unemployed or inadequate income
 4 Delayed—to continue education
 5 Delayed—personal illness
 6 Delayed—family responsibilities
 7 Delayed—parental objections
8 Other

79—*What is your most perplexing personal problem?*

- X No response
 O Getting a job
 1 Making sufficient money
 2 Social popularity
 3 Social relations with opposite sex
 4 School progress
 5 Religion
 6 Family relationships
 7 Marital relationships
 8 No problem
 9 Own or family health

.....Y Other

80—*Attitude on Future*

A *Concerning your personal future, do you feel*

- X No response
 O Enthusiastic
 1 Hopeful
 2 Indifferent
 3 Resigned
 4 Embittered

.....5 Other

X *What would you like to say about the "youth problem"?*

Y *Attitude toward Interview and Nature of Responses Generally*

- | | |
|----------------------|-----------------|
| O Intel-cooper. | 5 Naive-cooper. |
| 1 Intel-inter. | 6 Naive-inter. |
| 2 Intel-indif. | 7 Naive-indif. |
| 3 Intel-susp. | 8 Naive-susp. |
|4 Intel-hostile | 9 Naive-hostile |

Z *Place where youth was interviewed*

- | | |
|----------------------|-----------------------|
| X No report | 4 Community center |
| O Home | 5 School |
| 1 Park or playground | 6 Place of employment |
| 2 Club | 7 Employment office |
| 3 Church | 8 Street |
| |9 Other |

INDEX

- Age, 3, 9, 11, 36, 54, 105, 138, 174-76, 211
 attitude toward war, 244
 of unemployment, 146
 marriage, 43
 sex education in school, 88, 90
 Allegany county, 10
 American Youth Commission, 1, 2, 5, 6, 9, 51, 93
 (footnote), 96
 Anti-war propaganda, 242
 Baltimore, 9, 173
 Criminal Justice Commission, 160
 school system, 51
 Beauticians, 136
 Business schools. *See* Vocational training
 Calvert county, 10
 Carroll county, 10
 Catholic, 11, 193, 196-97, 226
 attitude toward war, 244-46
 broken homes, 21
 drinking, 200-201, 238
 number children desired, 201
 parents, 194-95
 schools, 53
 sex education, 40, 200
 size of family, 24
 Chapman-Sims Socio-Economic Scale, 93 (footnote)
 Child labor, 98, 99, 137-38, 141-43, 254
 control, 141-43
 government regulation, 224-28
 Church, 5, 40, 42, 193-205
 attendance, 197-98
 function of, 201-5
 youth membership, 196-97
See also Catholic; Jew; Protestant
 City population, 9, 11, 30, 145
 attitude toward war, 244
 broken homes, 20
 church affiliation, 197
 distribution, 144
 library service, 173-74, 176-78
 recreation, 168-69, 182
 wages, 118-19, 210-11, 218-19
 working age, 138-40
 Clubs, 5, 168-71
See also Recreation; Community youth centers
 College education, 6, 53, 55, 56, 93 (footnote), 94,
 96, 123-24, 146-48, 176-78
 Community youth centers, 188-89, 204
See also Recreational programs
 Crime
 age curve, 160
 in Germany, 159
 in Great Britain, 150
 in Italy, 159
 in United States, 159
See also Delinquency
 Delinquency, 44, 159
 juvenile, 185-88
 Dental care, 29-30
 Desertion, 19, 21, 26
 Divorce, 19, 21, 26
See also Homes; Parents
 Drinking, 200-201, 236-40, 254
 Education, 51, 255
 age distribution, 51, 52
 and advancement, 128-30
 and marital status, 46
 and religion of parents, 195-96
 and war, 248
 cost of, 66, 80
 cultural value of, 86-88
 economic value of, 81
 effect on wages, 120-24
 expanded, 56, 88
 grade attainment, 46, 92-97, 121, 165-69
 library service, 174-78
 program adjustment, 80, 81
 working age, 138-40
 youth problem, 255
See also Occupation of father; School; Students;
 Vocational training
 Elementary education, 54-57, 96, 121-24, 146-47,
 176-78
 Employment, 9, 13, 60, 94, 131-37, 241, 254
 age of, 137-38
 and guidance, 78, 79
 and vocational training, 72
 and youth problem, 255
 full-time, 104-5
 grade attainment, 58, 95
 hours, 110-12
 of married women, 233-36, 254
 part-time, 104, 107-8
 satisfaction with, 134-37
 wages, 108-28
 Employment agencies, 148-50
 Enoch Pratt Library, 173
 Farm population, 6, 9, 11, 40, 145
 and vocational guidance, 74
 attitude toward war, 244
 broken homes, 20
 child labor, 141-43
 church affiliation, 197
 distribution, 144
 drinking, 238
 economic value of education, 82
 grade attainment, 57, 92
 in school, 52
 library service, 173-74, 176-78
 modern conveniences, 30, 32
 part-time education, 70
 recreation, 164-65, 168-69, 182
 wages, 118-19, 210-11, 218-19
 working age, 138
 working hours, 218-19
 Federal Emergency Relief Administration, 13 (foot-
 note)
 Females, 18
 attitude toward war, 240-46
 distribution, 144-45
 drinking, 236-38

Females—*Continued*

- education and marriage, 46
- families dependent upon, 26
- grade attainment, 60, 62
- in employment agencies, 148-50
- in school, 52
- marriage age, 43
- recreation, 161-62, 165
- satisfaction with job, 134
- sex education, 40
- wages, 120-21, 128
- Fifteenth Census of the United States, 12 (footnote)
- Foreign born, 11, 13
- parents, 194
- religion, 193

Garrett county, 10

Government regulation, 216-19

- relief, 220-24
- wages and hours, 212-16
- See also* Suffrage

Grade attainment. *See* Education

High school education, 54-56, 96, 121-24, 146-48

- Homes, 5, 17-38
 - and church affiliation, 21
 - broken, 19-20
 - modern conveniences, 30-34
 - of married youth, 44
 - size of families, 22, 36, 38
- See also* Occupation of father; Parents
- Howard county, 10

Interviewers, 3, 72, 256

- attitude of, 5
- training, 4

Jew, 11, 193, 196

- attitude toward war, 244-46
- broken homes, 21
- drinking, 200-201
- parents, 194
- sex education, 40, 200
- size of family, 24, 201

Labor market, 103-6, 143

Leisure-time activity. *See* Recreation

Libraries, 5, 172-80

Males, 18

- distribution, 144-45
- drinking, 236-38
- education and marriage, 46
- families dependent upon, 26
- grade attainment, 57, 60
- in employment agencies, 148-50
- in school, 52
- marriage age, 43
- recreation, 161-62, 164-65
- satisfaction with job, 134
- sex education, 40-42
- wages, 121-22, 126-27
- war, 240-46

Marital status, 18, 43-48

- and church attendance, 198
- and family income, 44
- distribution, 144-45
- effect on wages and hours, 110, 118
- female employment, 233-36
- grade attainment, 46-47

Marital status—*Continued*

- low-cost housing, 44
- modern living conditions, 34
- Marriage. *See* Marital status
- Maryland, 9, 10
 - school system, 51
 - Youth population, 9
- Metropolitan Life Insurance Co., 159
- Miners, 6
- Movies, 40-42, 171-72
- See also* Recreation

National Youth Administration, 66, 98, 107, 156

- Negro, 9, 11, 25
 - broken homes, 20
 - child labor regulation, 224-26
 - dental care, 30
 - distribution, 144-45
 - drinking, 238
 - economic value of education, 82-84
 - education, 122-23
 - grade attainment, 57, 60
 - hours, 110-12
 - library service, 173-74
 - number in school, 52
 - occupation of father, 22, 63
 - recreation, 162
 - relief, 13, 34, 222-23
 - religion of parents, 194
 - sex education, 40, 90, 91
 - size of family, 24, 25
 - unemployed, 146
 - vocational guidance, 75
 - wages, 108, 114, 119-20, 219
 - youth problem, 251-55

Occupation of father, 22, 26, 44, 63, 154, 156, 195, 224-26

- and grade attainment, 61, 92, 97-99
- and occupation of youth, 93, 94, 140-41
- and part-time education, 70
- educational status, 58
- library use, 178-79
- size of family, 24
- vocational guidance, 75
- working age of youth, 140-41
- Occupations, 93-99, 106-7, 113-16, 123-37, 154-55
- See also* special field: Beauticians, Miners, Waitresses, etc.

Operatives

- canning, 136
- textile, 6, 128, 135, 136

Out-of-school youth, 51, 54-72, 94

- and marriage, 67
- and vocational training, 72
- economic value of education, 81, 84-85
- grade attainment, 55, 61, 92, 121
- part-time schools, 68-70
- reason for leaving school, 64
- recreation, 165-68
- size of family, 57, 58
- vocational guidance, 76, 155

Parents, 18

- church affiliation, 193-94, 195-96
- financially dependent on youth, 26-28
- sex education, 40, 42
- unable to finance education, 67
- See also* Occupation of father

- Politics, 231-32
 Prince Georges county, 10
 Protestant, 11, 193, 196, 226
 broken homes, 21
 drinking, 200-201, 238
 parents, 194-95
 schools, 53
 sex education, 40
 Recreation, 160-80, 255
 See also Clubs; Movies; Community youth centers
 Recreational programs, 48, 156, 165, 203-5
 attitude toward, 180-85
 Relief, 9, 13, 21, 24, 34, 57, 82, 138-40, 220-24, 253
 Religion, 21
 See Church
 School, 5, 40, 51-53, 72-91, 130, 165
 Separation, 19, 21, 26
 Sermons, 201-3
 Sex education, 40-42, 200-201
 birth control, 28
 taught in school, 67, 68, 88-91
 Smith, Payson, 51
 Students, 53, 81
 See also Education; Out-of-school youth
 Suffrage, 229-31, 254
 Teachers, 51, 72, 128, 136
 Town population, 11, 40, 165
 broken homes, 20
 child labor, 141-43
 modern conveniences, 30
 recreational programs, 182
 wages, 118-19
 Unemployment, 9, 13, 143-52
 grade attainment, 58, 96-99, 146-47
 vocational guidance, 78
 United States Department of Commerce, 159
 United States Office of Education, 13, 56, 96, 97, 147
 Updegraff, Harlan, 93 (footnote), 96
 Urban population. *See* City population
 Village population, 11, 38, 165
 broken homes, 20
 child labor, 141-43
 Village population—*Continued*
 modern conveniences, 30
 recreational programs, 182
 wages, 118-19
 Vocational guidance, 72-80
 Vocational maladjustment, 131-34, 136
 Vocational training, 6, 48, 67, 70, 72
 types desired, 71-72
 See also Education
 Wages, 28, 108-28, 253
 youth's attitude toward, 125-28, 209-19
 See also Females; Males; Negro; White youth
 Waitresses, 136
 War, 240-49, 254
 White youth, 9, 25, 40
 broken homes, 20
 child labor, 224-26
 distribution, 144
 drinking, 236-40
 economic value of education, 82
 grade attainment, 57, 60, 62
 hours, 110-12
 library service, 173-74
 occupation of father, 22, 63
 recreation, 162
 relief, 34, 223
 religion of parents, 194
 sex education, 40
 size of family, 24, 25
 unemployed, 146
 wages, 108, 119-20
 working age, 138-40
 vocational guidance, 75
 youth problem, 251-53
 Working hours, 110-12, 216-19
 Wright, Frank, 51
 Youth population
 in Maryland, 9
 in Maryland report, 9
 in United States, 9
 Youth problem, 1-6, 154-56, 249-55
 and unemployment, 151-52
 attitude of youth toward, 103, 209-16
 program suggested, 156

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